

# Disability Now

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CLASSIFIEDS



The Prince congratulates a winner of the Anglia/NHBC Design Awards, Richard Fraser of Westbury Homes.

## “Try life in a wheelchair”

The Prince of Wales has thrown down the gauntlet to architects, builders and designers of housing who are unaware of the difficulties facing some 5.8 million disabled people living in the community. “Try life in a wheelchair for a short time,” he said.

They would experience switches out of reach, doors too narrow and heavy to open, taps

impossible to turn on – “things that cause rage and frustration to the wheelchair user. From the point of view of the individual affected, it is the house that may have the disability sometimes and not the person.”

The prince was speaking at the presentation of new annual awards for house design instigated by his Advisory Group on Disability and the National

*continued on page 2*

## State saves £11 billion a year on caring

People looking after disabled, sick or elderly friends and relatives are saving the state at least £11 billion and yet most of them get no help at all.

This staggering figure comes from the sixth Family Policy Studies Centre bulletin. It coincides with *A New Deal for Carers*, a book from the Kings Fund which gives practical advice to policy makers in local health and social services departments on how to meet carers' needs.

The Family Policy Study Centre estimates Britain has six million carers, mainly women, and 1.4 million of these spend more than 20 hours on caring tasks each week. Annual public expenditure on community care is around £6 billion – informal caring saves the Government at least twice this sum.

It based its figures on the two recent Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) reports on disability and the most up-to-date Audit Commission figures.

Janice Robinson, director of Informal Caring Support at the King's Fund, said: “We all know that carers are the backbone of community care but we are in

grave danger of exploiting them.”

To accompany the book the King's Fund has published a 10-point plan for carers, which is a charter of their needs. This includes an income for carers which does not stop them having a job or sharing care; recognition of carers' own needs, emotional and practical; information about benefits and services, and services designed through consultation with carers at all levels of planning.

It is endorsed by six major voluntary agencies.

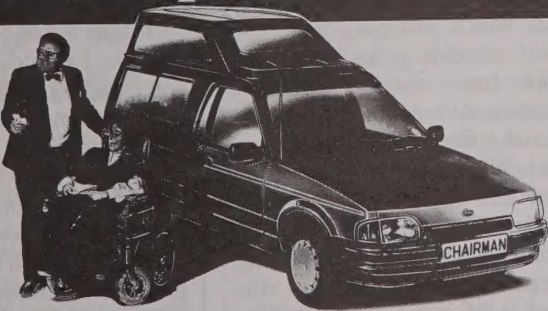
Director of the Carers National Association, Jill Pitkeathley, said that of the 1.7 million carers living in the same house as the person they care for, two-thirds get no help whatsoever.

Often the carers themselves are elderly and the type of help they get can greatly affect the quality of care they provide.

Jill Pitkeathley quoted a letter from a 74-year-old woman who

*continued on page 2*

## Put yourself in the picture



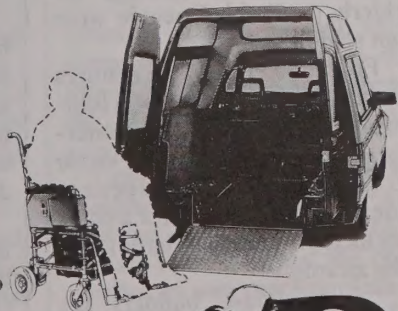
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## Protest at Government U-turn

Assurances not to means test disabled people's home improvements have been abandoned, according to a new Government consultation paper for the Housing Bill. This is “an incomprehensible about turn,” says John Stanford, RADAR's housing officer.

A December 1987 consultation paper read: “Disabled people will not be subject to a test of resources for adaptation work.”

Then in January this year the Department of the Environment announced that grants for adaptations *would* be based on tests of resources. The statement came in a paper, *Renovation Grants: Proposed Test of Resources*.

Disability groups argue that since adaptations often make no difference to the value of a house, this makes it harder to gain loans, and loans may also lead to long term financial obligations.

David Prior at the Department of Environment admitted that the statement contradicted the earlier proposal, but said, “there is time and flexibility to examine all areas of the paper.”

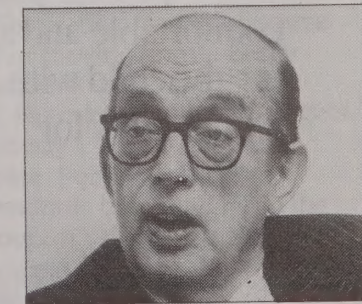
## Griffiths still optimistic

It is a year since Sir Roy Griffiths produced his report *Community Care: Agenda for Action* and still there has been no official Government response.

The report proposed giving local authorities' social services departments responsibility and resources for community care. But Government policy has been seeking to reduce the power of local authorities.

It was rumoured that control for community care was to be put in the hands of the Family Practitioner Committees, a plan Sir Roy does not favour.

Speaking at the press launch of the King's Fund book on carers, he said: “Community care is not a medical problem. It is about getting out there and understanding what is going on in individual households and this isn't a



role doctors have traditionally had.”

Although it is still uncertain how and when the report will be implemented, Sir Roy said he is a “born optimist”. But Tessa Harding, of the National Council for Voluntary Organisation's Community Care Project, said: “We are concerned that the NHS review (*see page 2*) makes the whole planning of services that much more difficult – it will fragment things more.”



## Incontinence supplies inadequate

Parents of children who are incontinent are being denied adequate provision, according to the Association of Continence Advisers.

"Parents are often left uninformed of what facilities they are entitled to, and the Government has been very woolly about the regulations," said Helen White, a continence adviser in north east England.

On average, 70 children per health area are incontinent, but standards of provision for them differ wildly between regions.

In Bloomsbury, North London, there are four continence advisers running clinics and assessments for children.

In neighbouring Hampstead, however, there is only one adviser who sees no patients and deals mainly with stores and supplies.

The Department of Health maintains that children who are registered disabled and are in full-time education are entitled to an adequate supply of equipment from their local health service.

But Helen White stresses that this supply is infrequent and inadequate.

"There has been confusion between the health authority's power to provide equipment, and parents' entitlement to it."

"It's often a matter of budget," said Dorothy Mandelstam, chairman of the Association, "and some health authorities give incontinence a different priority."



The 58 pupils of Linden-Bennett School, Hounslow are in the swim after the opening of a £246,000 hydro-therapy pool. The money was raised by parents, staff and local residents. Once the fund reached £160,000, Hounslow Council matched it pound for pound. All the pupils have severe learning difficulties.

## Another protest at GLAD

Twenty-one people protesting that the Greater London Association for Disabled People (GLAD) is unrepresentative of disabled people and that its employment policy betrays those it claims to represent, disrupted a GLAD executive committee meeting in January.

It was the second time in two months that protesters had gathered at GLAD's Brixton headquarters; the first had been to complain about the appointment of Neale Huggins as director.

According to a spokesperson for the protesters: "Until GLAD are accountable to disabled Londoners and become part of the

disability movement, we will continue to embarrass them at every opportunity."

At the committee confrontation GLAD chairman Cornel Siegruhn offered a further meeting. He later confirmed this in a letter, pointing out that under GLAD's constitution, 51 per cent of the executive committee must be disabled.

"We do recognise the need to represent fully all sections of the disability community and are committed to continuing our work in this area," he said. He hoped that any areas of conflict would be resolved.

The protesters say they will be meeting GLAD.

## Mixed reactions to NHS White Paper

The implications of the Government's White Paper on the National Health Service, published last month, which aims to give patients "better choice", are mixed and uncertain for people with disabilities.

The White Paper proposes, among other things, allowing GPs in large practices to become "budget holders" and buy hospital tests and operations from the NHS or private hospitals. It also puts controls on the amount of drugs GPs can prescribe.

Any money doctors save can be ploughed back into their practice but overspending will lead to financial penalties.

All this has led to fears that disabled, chronically sick and elderly people might find it hard to register with GPs because of the cost of their treatment.

However, according to details leaked from a working party document on new rules for GPs, those who opt for budget control will not be able to refuse to take on disabled and elderly people.

Phillipa Russell, principal officer of the Voluntary Council for Handicapped Children, remains doubtful: "Children who

are disabled could find it hard to get on to a GP's list because they are more expensive to treat."

At the time of going to press, the working party document had not been published officially.

Another concern of disability organisations is that the White Paper makes no reference to Sir Roy Griffiths' report on community care.

Even if the GPs budget scheme leads to quicker treatment by placing patients with another health authority, there is no indication in the White Paper of how they will get the necessary backup resources after leaving hospital, eg repeat visits to consultants, or who will pay for transport.

Brian Lamb of The Spastics Society said: "The Government should be spending less time worrying about GPs prescribing habits and more time considering how to co-ordinate health services in the community."

At the moment the Government's bill for residential placements is £1 billion and rising, so it could be cost effective for the Government to improve community provision.

## Winners

Toby Churchill, featured in October's *DN* for his portable writer, won a British Design Award in January this year.

The SL1 Lightwriter is a small v-shaped plastic keyboard with two screens, for the writer and reader. It has been on the market for only ten months, but has already totted up sales of 280. This includes 40 overseas, mainly to Scandinavia.

The SL1 costs a basic £392. But a new model with larger keys is due out later this year.

*Stand up the real Glynn Vernon*, a video made by Vanson Wardle Productions for The Spastics Society, has won an IVCA (International Visual Communications Association) education award.

The association is mainly made up of corporate video makers. Over 600 entries were submitted.

## Prince tells architects

*continued from page 1*

House Building Council.

Sponsored by Nationwide Anglia and the NHBC, the awards concentrate on the needs of the customer, aiming to improve new homes and encourage ideas which not only meet the needs of elderly and disabled people but make a home more convenient for everyone.

In the first year security and accessibility have been emphasised and for the coming year safety will be added.

Entries were divided into four categories, depending on the number of dwellings built in a year. (Sites built specially for elderly or disabled people were not eligible.)

From 133 entries, the winners were Westbury Homes (Holdings) with Bovis Homes runner-up, Cumbrian Industrials, Victor E Toogood, and a special prize to Ideal Homes London for a charter incorporating standards set by the awards.

"Some house builders are sensitive and responsive to people's fundamental needs," commented Prince Charles.

He believed: "These awards deserve widespread recognition and will be instrumental in setting standards for the future."

## State saves £11 billion

*continued from page 1*

had cared for her husband, doubly incontinent and completely disabled after two strokes, for 12 years. She wrote: "No-one ever told me how to get help. In the hospital it took three nurses to turn him but no-one ever asked me how I would cope. I do need someone to take a bit of notice of me sometimes. Carers are a forgotten race."

"Service providers get taken over by a sort of paralysis when considering carers," said Jill Pitkeathley, "which is not surprising given the numbers. But this is a clear statement of what needs to be done."

Ann Richardson, one of the book's authors, said it is not intended as criticism of local health and social services departments but as a way of showing examples of pioneering work already being done around the country.

GPs did come in for some criticism at the launch, for not doing enough to refer carers to agencies who could help.

*A New Deal for Carers*, £4.50, Book Sales, King's Fund Centre, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NF. *Carers Needs - a 10-point plan for Carers*, 100 copies free on request until 31 August.

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## Law on mental handicap "hopeless"

The law governing decision-making by or on behalf of people with mental handicaps is hopelessly confused and leaves dependent adults open to exploitation and abuse.

This is the view of the Law Society in a discussion document by its mental health sub-committee last month.

It says the law allows only limited financial management on behalf of some mentally handicapped adults and, in some circumstances, consent to medical treatment.

But there is no provision for day-to-day decisions or for people with very different mental capacities. Where legislation exists it is complicated, inflexible, piecemeal and, the committee

says, widely ignored.

The situation was highlighted recently by the case of a 35-year-old woman with a mental age of five whose mother wants to have her sterilised to prevent an unwanted pregnancy.

Three appeal court judges decided she could be legally sterilised without her consent but at the time of going to press, a decision from the House of Lords was still pending.

The Law Society committee wants to see a recognition in law of the difference between those who are incompetent and mentally incapable of making decisions, and vulnerable people who can make decisions but cannot put them into practice.

This distinction has been par-

tially recognised in the Disabled Persons Act 1986: local authorities must recognise representatives appointed by disabled people.

"Unfortunately," the committee says, "this provision has not yet been implemented, nor does it extend to other authorities which may have influence over the disabled person's life."

Legal changes would need careful testing. The committee invites anyone concerned or working in this field to send in their views.

*Decision-making and Mental Incapacity: A Discussion Document, The Law Society's Hall, 113 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1PL.*

## Wheelchair speed change

The Department of Transport has just changed the speed regulations for electric wheelchair users.

A new class of chair will be introduced which will travel, as before, at four miles an hour on pavements, but may go at eight miles an hour on roads.

Junior minister Peter Bottomley, said: "The regulations have been drawn up after consultation with manufacturers, groups of disabled people, road safety and transport organisations and other interested parties."

The regulations also cover unladen weight restrictions (not to exceed 150 kilograms), width (not to exceed 0.85 metres), lights, rear-view mirror, speed indicator and warning horn.

Tim Shapley of the Joint Committee on Mobility for the Disabled said: "We're all for the changes. It's tedious to have to go at four miles an hour."

But he questioned the likely price of (non-compulsory) insurance for road-users. "I've heard figures of up to £150 a year, which seems a rip off to me."

## New sports association

"Our ultimate aim is to create an organisation comparable to the British Olympic Association," said CP Sport's Howard Bailey.

He was speaking shortly after the British Paralympic Association's inaugural meeting in London in February.

"We are moving away from a disability-centred structure and towards a sports-centred one. Instead of having five or six organisations working in different ways, we will identify national needs and potential."

Fifty-three delegates from disabled sports groups, national and government bodies attended the meeting, and all supported the Association's aims: raising enthusiasm for the next Paralympic games (Barcelona 1992), initiating a Paralympic Day in the UK, and assisting participation in other sporting events.

The next meeting will be 4 March.

## If at first you don't succeed . . . keep trying

A one-woman campaign to improve access at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich has scored a first round victory.

Carolyn Lucas of South London, who uses a wheelchair, tried to visit the Armada exhibition at the NMM with her husband in June, but was turned away.

She was told that a large part of the exhibition was on the inaccessible first floor, aisles were narrow and some exhibits were at ground level.

Not content with this, she wrote to Richard Ormond, director of the NMM; the Museum's senior trustee, the Duke of Edinburgh; the Museum's funders; Pearson plc who sponsored the exhibition, and David Picton, leader of Greenwich Council.

In reply, Richard Ormond said access for disabled people was subject to the extent of the crowds in the exhibition - and money for improvements.

In August Carolyn Lucas decided to try and visit the Armada exhibition again but this time she rang beforehand. When she arrived she was only let in after 45 minutes discussion.

"After going around, I wondered what all the fuss had been about. There were absolutely no problems at all getting around, apart from the stairs, of which I was already aware."

She wrote another letter of complaint and now her efforts

seem to have paid off. The NMM's trustees have insisted measures are taken to make all parts of the museum accessible. They have agreed to improve-



"One person can change things."

ments in publicity, parking and toilet facilities and a lift will be installed by 1990.

"The messages arising from this seem to be that taking issue with those at the top reaps dividends and that action by just one person can change things," said Carolyn Lucas.

*Mutiny on the Bounty is the next major exhibition at the museum, April-October. Nobody with disabilities will be turned away but people in wheelchairs are asked to avoid weekends and mid-day. Group parties are asked to phone in advance.*

## Fan club on wheels

Grimsby Town football club, currently languishing near the foot of the fourth division, boast the country's only disabled away supporters club.

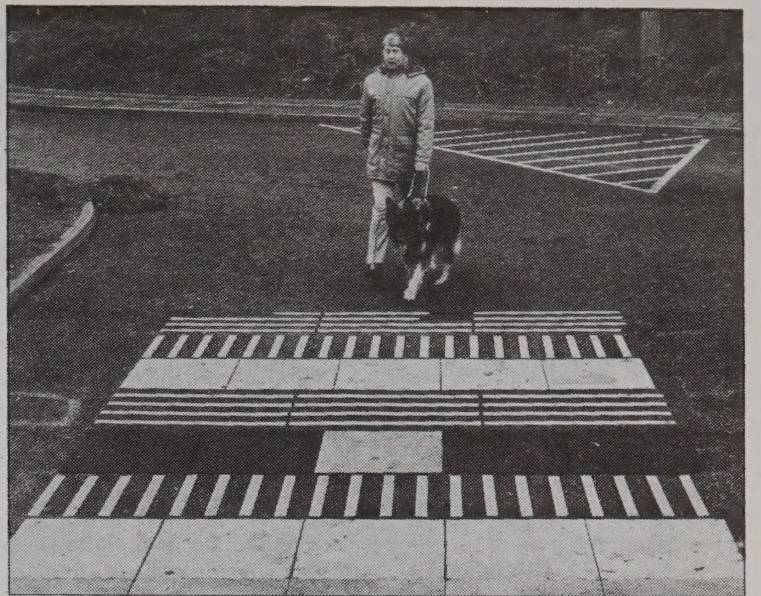
Conceived nine years ago by Daphne Farquharson and her husband to help their disabled son see more matches, the club now has its own coach, and takes up to 30 fans to matches as far away as Torquay.

"We've only missed nine matches in nine years," says Daphne Farquharson, "and our members range from 16 to 76 years old." Now they are so well established, the Grimsby players

will often come into their coach during motorway stops, and the atmosphere is "very friendly," she says.

Despite their lowly league performance this season, Grimsby have annihilated some first class opposition in cup fixtures, so the club may yet have the chance to go to Wembley. Access there is "limited," said a spokesman, "but improvements are underway."

★ The Sports Minister Colin Moynihan has announced that disabled people will be exempt from the ID card scheme for football fans.



Scientists in Berkshire are developing a "Braille pavement" with various surface textures to alert blind people to traffic dangers. The £25,000 project, based at the Cranfield Institute of Technology, aims for a pattern which will not disrupt people with walking difficulties or wheelchair users.

THE OBSERVER

## Creative seeing success

Gioya Steinke reports

There has been a great breakthrough in opportunities for blind and partially sighted people to experience art and exhibitions, according to a report from the Creative Seeing Conference held in Cardiff this February.

At least 850 museums have facilities for visually handicapped visitors, 600 have ten or more items that can be touched, 450 have large print brochures, 60 provide tapes and 30 print braille guides.

The conference, run by Welsh Arts Council's Dr Nick Pearson, attracted 65 delegates, with six speakers discussing galleries, teaching, international awareness, exhibitions and "paintings to touch".

Gaynor Edwards, a painter and sculptor who has exhibited her touch paintings, talked of responses from people who had

"never thought of pictures before, because there had been no point."

Increased awareness is being shown in other fields too.

The Royal Academy has asked all entrants to this year's summer show to indicate whether their exhibits may be touched. Live commentary in theatres giving details of action and staging is being tested, and many cathedrals now have taped guides, tactile maps and small models.

Many delegates said that they had learnt a great deal about seeing, not only in the recognised sense, but through understanding tunnel vision, for example.

Dr Pearson summed up the conference's attitude:

"Many of the approaches that help visually impaired people appreciate better are the same approaches that enable everyone to see and appreciate better."

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## IN PARLIAMENT

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

#### Extending Mobility Allowance

An amendment submitted by the Mobility Allowance Campaign (a group of voluntary organisations) was moved by John Battle (Lab) at the committee stage of the Social Security Bill on 19 January.

It aimed to extend mobility allowance to people with a mental handicap whose behaviour is unpredictable and to people who are both deaf and blind.

Peter Thurnham (Con), supporting the amendment, said that in the light of cases produced by MENCAP and The Spastics Society, extra provision should be found to help people who have real problems in qualifying for the allowance.

Minister for Social Security Nicholas Scott was sympathetic to the cause, but said it was complex. It would be best to "await

the results of the OPCS survey and consider the matter comprehensively against the background of other changes to benefits that we might make at that stage".

The amendment was withdrawn.

### HOUSE OF LORDS

#### Reassurance for parents

During the report stage of the Children's Bill on 6 February, Lord Carter (Lab) moved an amendment to ensure that if one or both parents have a disability, this alone would not put the child "in need".

RADAR, he said, knows of disabled people who are afraid to have children in case they would be removed.

He wanted Government assurance that disabled parents would be protected from inappropriate intervention by child care agencies and that their right to be parents would be respected.

The Lord Chancellor said: "There is no question of a child being held to be in need simply because his parent or, indeed, both parents, are disabled."

Lord Carter found the reply "extremely helpful" and withdrew his amendment.

Kate Nash

### Social Worker (Service Development) £11,934 - £13,497

The Spastics Society is seeking a social worker with at least 2 years post-qualification experience to work with staff and service users, based at Kelvedon, Essex.

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The fun you can have with a Roamer.

## MICROTECH

### Winning BETT Janet Larcher reports

Three features of the BETT (British Education and Training Technology) exhibition particularly caught my attention this year. First, the inclusion of equipment to support the teaching of craft, design and technology. Secondly, the large number of computer companies now actively competing for business in the education market. And thirdly, a robot called Roamer.

The graphic capabilities of the Archimedes, Atari and Nimbus computers are highly impressive.

Some of their specific applications are fascinating, eg weaving and music.

With one exception, there are no peripherals or software for special needs on these computers. Indeed, there is minimal specific educational software.

It was therefore good to see familiar devices - including keyboards, Micromike and switches controlling an IBM computer.

At the moment there are only one or two programs available for those devices on IBM compatibles. However, now that the MTECH board is available, it is hoped that appropriate software will be developed.

While there were several new packages from established educational software houses, there was nothing outstanding. Podd enthusiasts may be pleased to know that there is now a concept keyboard version available.

"Roamer" arose from some careful market research by Valiant Technology Ltd. Teachers required a device whose movement in space could be controlled with a logo type language, but which worked independently of a computer.

The device also had to be equally attractive to boys and girls. From the comments that I heard in the crush around the stand, Roamer meets these requirements and is a winner.

**PS** BIT 32, the company which makes Headstart equipment, has been given £500,000 by the Department of Training and Industry to see if brainwaves can be used to control computers. They are looking for three controllable dimensions, which can be modified to move a cursor around a screen so as to select computer keys.

Valiant Technology Ltd., Gulf House, 370 Old York Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 1SP, tel: 01-874 8747/874 9000.

**Correction.** Carol Vella of Coventry Polytechnic points out that the survey and report of Computers and the Disabled, discussed last month, was a joint project with John Pickering and David Neilson of Warwick University.

## IN BRIEF

### Access to personal files

Hard on the heels of the legal right to see medical records, (*DN* February) comes the Access to Personal Files Act 1987 which takes effect on 1 April.

This will give individuals the right to see files kept on them by local authorities' housing and social services departments. Similar regulations to allow parents the right to see their children's education records are due to be published in February and will come into effect later this year.

### Crossing the road safely

A new device to help blind and visually impaired people cross the road safely has been installed on a busy main road in Fareham, Hampshire. It is attached under the existing pelican crossing control box and rotates when the "green man" lights up. By touching the device, people can feel whether it is safe to cross.

The verdict of David Macdonald, 60, (*below*) who is blind: "Amazing, splendid. It's a big step for independence."

It cost Hampshire County Council £2,000 to buy and install. Invented at Nottingham University with Department of Transport backing, it is sold by Radix Systems of Winchester.



### Money for housing

A project to provide housing for people with cerebral palsy, whose elderly parents are worried about their children's future, needs to raise a further £50,000.

The York and District Spastics Society has already raised £50,000. When it reaches £100,000, the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust will match it and donate another £100,000.

The Society hopes to buy a six to eight bedroom house for short and long-term accommodation. It has 30 people with cp aged over 40 among its members and a further 34 aged 30-40. Most of their parents are over 80. Anyone who can help should phone (0904) 414181 ext 283.

### RNIB there first

The Royal National Institute for the Blind was the first charity to take advantage of free advertising offered by Rupert Murdoch's satellite Sky Television channel, launched last month.

The 30-second fundraising appeal was produced free for the RNIB by their agency Arc Advertising and Greystoke Productions.

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# The social fund one year on

Geraldine Holden looks at its impact on disabled people

"The social fund is here to stay," according to Bill Taylor, Department of Social Security under-secretary for social policy.

But is it really meeting the needs of people with disabilities?

When it was launched a year ago in April the fund met a barrage of criticism because it replaced supplementary benefit one-off payments for much-needed items, with discretionary, repayable loans.

£201 million was allocated for the fund and then divided up: £141 million for loans and £60 million for non-repayable community care grants. The loans were divided up again into budgeting loans and crisis loans.

To qualify for a budget loan or community care grant people have to be on income support. You don't have to be on income support to qualify for a crisis loan but you must have no savings and no access to any other source of help. Loan repayments are deducted from weekly benefit.

The Government's criteria for

the DSS has admitted one of the causes of low take-up of community care grants has been poor publicity by his department.

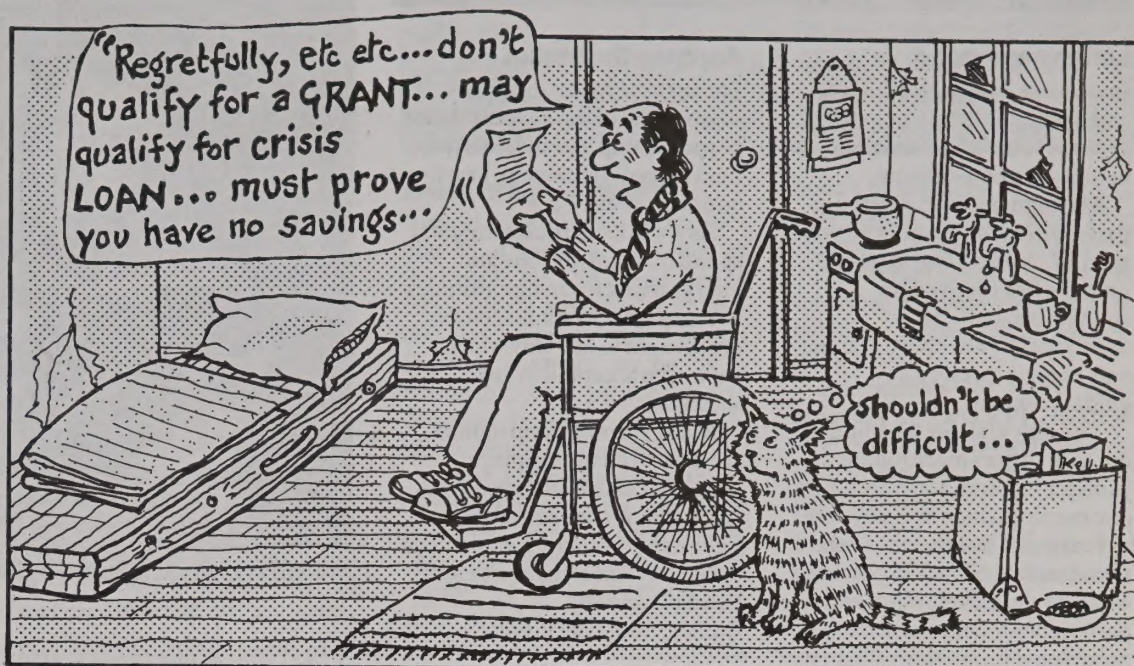
So far £500,000 has been spent on social fund publicity. The size of next year's publicity budget has yet to be decided.

Nicholas Scott, Minister for Social Security and the Disabled, does expect social fund take-up to improve but does not expect the size of next year's fund to be insufficient, because, he says, of the general fall in the numbers on income support.

Under the old supplementary benefit system, the budget for one-off payments was not set. People who met certain requirements were entitled to a payment. The social fund has a fixed yearly budget.

Gary Craig says the social fund is about managing demand: "The Government has done this by very restrictive guidelines and very restrictive criteria for applications."

There were legal regulations



from the word go: "The huge forms, which are more like books, are off-putting."

Each DSS office has its own budget divided into 12 monthly budgets to meet anticipated demand. This could lead to different decisions, in similar circumstances, at different times in different areas, and even at different times in the same area.

Another complicating factor is that no payment can be made for the same item or service more than once every six months. If someone is really desperate, they may accept a loan because they cannot wait another six months to re-apply for a grant.

Nicholas Scott says one of the main aims of bringing in income support was to give people a sum of money to manage for themselves.

But if people have to apply to the fund for basic needs, it implies the income support personal allowance and premiums (disability, severe disability and disabled child premiums) are set too low.

An extra £60 million is going to disabled people under 60 through the premiums in 1989/90 – a rise of 65p and 90p a week in disability premium for individuals and couples respectively.

## Targeting

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the fund is its "targeting".

In the social fund guidelines for officers, different groups and different needs are given priority. The aim is to make sure money goes to people in a priority group with a priority need.

For example, clothing and

footwear are classified by the DSS as low priority. The maximum grant for clothing and footwear combined is £150.

Ginny Jenkins, clothing and footwear adviser at the Disabled Living Foundation, is worried that for people who destroy their clothes because of behavioural problems or parents of children with unusual ways of getting about such as bottom shuffling, this will not be enough.

She has not heard of anyone getting a loan for clothes. This suggests people simply go without.

Community care grants are "to help applicants to live as in-

somewhere. There will always be some who are only fractionally on the wrong side of it, and disappointment in those cases is inevitable, I'm afraid."

Research just published by Nottingham University's Benefits Research Unit, called *Empty Premises – Empty Promises*, found that of 43 people leaving psychiatric care in Nottingham last year, 60 per cent were excluded from the social fund.

They conclude: "Unless sufficient cash help is available to allow people to equip their new homes to a safe and civilised standard, much of the expenditure involved in preparing people

**ROBERT & PATRICIA GUINEY**, aged 57 and 42, live in Port Seton, East Lothian. Robert is blind, has arthritis, uses a wheelchair and is incontinent because of kidney trouble. Patricia has mobility problems after getting polio as a child. Robert worked for the Fire Brigade until a car crash forced him to resign. Their joint weekly income support is £96. After a £6 "Fuel Direct" deduction by the Department of Social Security for gas and £3.71 for a budgeting loan, they get only £86.29. The social fund loan was for a washing machine after their machine broke down. They applied for a community care grant for a combined washing machine/tumbledrier. The local DSS officer thought the sum was "not unreasonable" but still refused because they were not in danger of going into care. He gave them a loan of £273. They appealed and in December got a letter from the social fund inspectorate overturning the local office decision. This January, seven months since their original application, the local DSS office wrote to say the original decision stands and they cannot have a grant. "What makes me really angry is the length of time they take to respond to letters."

the new system were simplicity, targeting money where there was greatest need and "economic efficiency" or saving money. It seems to have fulfilled this third aim.

## Economic efficiency

Gary Craig, research fellow at Bradford University's School of Applied Social Studies, says in 1986 the Government was spending around £400 million on one-off payments under the old supplementary benefit system.

By March 1988 this sum had fallen to £190 million, as a result of Government cutbacks.

In this financial year the budget for grants is £60 million (with £141 million as repayable loans), a cut of £49 million, or £200 million compared to 1986.

"That much need does not disappear overnight," says Gary Craig. "The Government is not comparing like with like. There has been a massive drop in funding."

Out of the £60 million allocated for community care grants, it looks as if around £30 million will not have been spent by April. Yet one in two applicants have been turned down.

The Government has said the budget for the fund in 1989/90 will be the same as the past year. This does not take into account inflation or the possibility of increased demand. Bill Taylor of

laying down what people were entitled to under the old system. Now social fund officers make discretionary decisions, helped by guidelines.

Virginia Alison, a research officer at The Spastics Society, says because officers are used to regulations they may tend to play on the safe side and interpret the guidelines too strictly.

The Department of Social Security is now "clarifying the guidance in the social fund manual to lay more stress on the scope for flexible application".

## Simplicity

Another Government criterion for the social fund was that it should be easy to use.

Ann Davis, lecturer in social work and social policy at Birmingham University, thinks barriers are built into the system

**DAVID WHITTAM**, 37, of North London, has diabetes, is blind in one eye, partially sighted in the other and needs dialysis three times a week. Weekly income support for himself and his wife is £81.03. Before the benefits changes last April he got invalidity benefit topped up with supplementary benefit. He says he's now worse off because his benefit is frozen and doesn't keep up with inflation. Neither does his income support cover all the extra costs he incurs because of his disability – transport to the hospital, extra heating because people with diabetes feel the cold acutely, extra shoes because they have feet problems, and a special diet. Under the old supplementary benefit system he could get extra weekly allowances for heating and special diet and one-off payments for shoes. He cannot afford to go to the social fund for a loan: "Which bank manager would lend me money when I'm living under the poverty line? I cannot pay the money back, so there is no point in asking for a social fund loan."

for life in the community will be money down the drain."

The Government has recently funded research by York University's Social Policy Research Unit to find out if the social fund is meeting need.

## Apply now

If you want to apply for a community care grant, budgeting loan or crisis loan, you can get a form from your local social security office (address in the phone book).

You are entitled to a form if you want one.

If you don't understand how to fill it in, you can get advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau or Disabled Information Advice Line (DIAL).

How the social fund works is explained in the current *Disability Rights Handbook*.

Don't be put off applying – it is your right.



# Letters to the Editor

Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

## Left to cope alone

In our own area of North Herts – and in many others – support groups for the blind and their families are non-existent.

My mother was registered as part-sighted for 9 years and now, aged 87, is blind. But in all that time she has received no counselling – official or unofficial. Neither have I (as her only helper) received any guidance on this.

The only club for the blind in our town caters more for the younger fit blind, and only meets one evening a month in any case.

I confess I feel that the local social services should try to do more for the elderly blind and part-sighted. Only twice have they visited my mother. When we first moved to this area in 1983, they fitted bath grips and arranged for Talking Books, and last year when she finally went blind they came with a list of information.

If only there was a course for helping carers to cope with the increasing blindness of a loved one.

Also I feel there should be a support group. They do exist, I know, but it seems to depend on where you live.

**Bel Bailey**  
16 Runnalow  
Letchworth, North Herts

*The RNIB runs no courses for carers of blind people, but if there is a demand, they will consider arranging one. Interested carers should write to RNIB NMC, 1 The Square, 111 Broad Street, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 1AS – Editor.*

## Applying the brakes

I must just express my deep disapproval of the advertisement in your newspaper in January for the Winged Fellowship Trust – entitled “Break Free”.

As a wheelchair user myself, I spend much of my time and energy trying to change attitudes so that a wheelchair is seen as a positive aid to mobility which should be accepted in any society.

Many years of campaigning are destroyed by the image portrayed in this advertisement and surely if I booked a Winged Fellowship holiday, I would need to take my wheelchair with me?

**Linda Durnall**  
Audley, Stoke on Trent

## Independent – thanks to British support

Please can I put forward some positive and wonderful things that cp children in this country receive in the way of care and education.

My son is 13 years, has no speech, and has to use a wheelchair all the time, but he has a busy and happy life. Last summer holiday he went from our home in Torquay with one of his pals on a walk to Paignton, had a good look around the shops and fair and returned quite safely via the busy roads and town centre. He'd spoken to any friends he met on the way, asked for anything he wanted in the shops, and chatted away to his friend. Pretty good, eh, and more than I could ever have dreamed possible.

Martin's “voice” is the very best money can buy. His Touch



Martin Haywood talks to his father using his “magic voice”.

HERALD EXPRESS

Talker with a smooth talking chip can store hundreds of sentences, phrases, jokes and even sings. He can use it extremely well and everyone can understand what he says.

The cash to buy this was raised by the Chudleigh police station who were sponsored in The Spastics Society jail-break from Dartmoor. He has been taught to use it by the speech therapist at his school, Dame Hannah Rogers, where he is a weekly boarder.

His “legs” are the very best wheelchair we could find. I sent for information, worked out what Martin needed and then advertised for an electric wheelchair in *DN*. The second-hand Myra was just like new and it was half-price.

You definitely cannot send a child out on his own in a chair that might tip, hasn't got good brakes or doesn't go up kerbs.

Martin's Myra also has hazard lights which he uses at all times he is on the roads.

Learning road safety is vitally important. We've walked around the neighbourhood together ever since he was a baby, so he knows every road and turn for miles.

The chair is insured too – only £18 a year.

I'm fed up with hearing what's not done for cp children in Britain. My son goes to the very best school and has the very best equipment to help him on his way to a successful future.

So if your child isn't off to Hungary for a year at enormous expense and disruption to family life, don't despair!

Finally, may I say a very big thank you to all the people who have helped Martin become the cheerful and independent boy he is today.

**Mrs Marion Haywood**  
Torquay, Devon

## 51 per cent of the Council should have cp

Having attended The Spastics Society's AGM, Valerie Lang's views (*Letters, DN* January) come as no surprise.

We totally disagree.

Of course cp people should be members of the Executive Council, but their presence there should not be a privilege, nor reserved for those with committee experience. The only qualification should be direct experience and knowledge of cerebral palsy.

Surely the Society's founding parents intended it to enable future generations of cp people to take over their own affairs – presumably including the Society itself. Therefore, it must be fundamental to the Society's aims that cp people play the major part in governing its affairs.

We do not disregard the role of parents, but an organisation truly accountable to those it claims to represent would have an Executive Council with at least a 51 per cent majority of cp people, reflecting the various circumstances of the cp population.

Furthermore, cp people would comprise the majority of the electorate.

But in reality the Society is not accountable to us. Instead, we are referred to as “clients” – ie recipients, not providers.

We emerged from the AGM discouraged – our disenfranchisement reconfirmed. Until the Society is truly ours, we think cp people will not be accepting the vice-chairman's invitation. Her “controversial” views simply restate the status quo.

**Ruth Bailey**  
**Bob Findlay**  
**Chris Davies**  
London NW1



## A change for the better!

Next time you're travelling across London and need to get from one Main Line terminal to another, try Carelink. It's an hourly door-to-door bus service between stations with cheerful little red and yellow buses. They're wheelchair accessible and they've got friendly patient drivers.

Carelink is especially for people who find ordinary buses or the Underground difficult to manage (you might be carrying luggage, for example). And at Victoria and Euston Carelink becomes an air link, meeting up with the frequent Airbus services to and from Heathrow. These buses, too, are now wheelchair-accessible.



For more information about these and other special facilities on London's buses, Underground and Docklands Light Railway, call London Transport's Unit for Disabled Passengers on 01-222 5600. Or write to the Unit at 55 Broadway, London SW1H 0BD.

DN3

## sic

### Office politics

We're glad to see *One in Four*, BBC2's disability programme, getting the status it deserves – an office on the fifth floor of tv centre in White City, alongside the chairman and managing director. Producer Christopher Hutchins says it's for the wheelchairs, but we suspect otherwise, and confidently predict a bloodless coup before the year is out.

### Travel tribulation

Tim Malpass of Nottingham had a bracing brush with bureaucracy recently, when he took a trip to Cardiff and London. British Rail were good enough to tell him how many steps would come between his wheelchair and the RAF museum at Hendon. Harrow Dial-a-Ride's phone number was answered by someone from North London Gas. Harrow Social Services thought that *Nottingham* Information would be best. Finally, Camden Dial-a-Ride could only take bookings four days in advance, and then said they could only cater for

“residents of the borough”. An older, wiser Tim Malpass opted in the end for a good old taxi ride.

### Chair nickers

“Daredevil kids,” says *The News of the World*, “are stealing wheelchairs for dodgem races on steep hills.” Elevating it to the status of a “craze”, the doyen of investigative journalism adds that “more than 40” wheelchairs had been left “as mangled wrecks” near Lincoln county hospital. Who could doubt that they had been on the spot to check their facts, or that the hospital now faces a “severe shortage” of chairs? The hospital themselves admit one chair has been damaged, and that 40 have gone in the past four years.

### Possum patrol

Now for the story of an old lady and a burglar. The burglar crept stealthily into the old lady's house, but not stealthily enough! In a twinkling, she gave commands to all her Possum friends: curtains swished open and shut, doors slammed, the phone began to dial itself, the radio piped up, and the poor intruder fled in blind terror. Finally, the boys in blue turned up. They were amazed – how could this one wheelchair-using

lady see off a robber? “I just set my Possum on them,” she said with a secret smile.

### Where Angels Dare

Starring Ellen Wilkie and directed by Robert Palmer (no relation to the singer), *Where Angels Dare* is a new ten-minute video about adapted flats. Ellen plays Julia, a wheelchair user who is constantly thwarted by bureaucracy and thoughtlessness from living independently. She is left alone in a flat where the light switches are too high, the kitchen cupboards too tight and the bathroom unadapted. What's more, the telephone is missing. She sets off, with help from well-meaning but patronising passers-by, to track down the culprits. “Take a seat,” suggests the first woman she visits. “You little people,” she continues, warming to her subject, “you'd be better off at home.” Forms must be completed, and Julia's in the wrong office, and why doesn't she see her social worker, and...wait for it...“you should have phoned us first!” £30 a month to statutory organisations, £20 a month to voluntary organisations from Choice, 152 Camden Road, London NW1 9HL, tel: 01-482 3687.

David Nicholson



# No access, no vote

At the Association of Electoral Administrators' conference in February, 200 delegates heard Brian Lamb argue for better access at polling stations and booths for disabled people, in time for the local county council elections in May. Here he summarises his case.



Disabled people represent nine per cent or more of the electorate, a sizeable chunk of the population that politicians ignore at their peril.

Yet many of them feel disenfranchised and alienated because they cannot reach polling stations or cannot vote if they get there.

Just before the General Election in 1987, The Spastics Society interviewed 70 disabled people living in the community or in residential centres in five representative constituencies: North West Durham, Greenwich, Kingston-on-Thames, Salford East and Surrey South West.

Here are some of their experiences.

● A man did not vote at the local election although his political party sent a car to take him to the polling station: he could not get his wheelchair into the car.

● A woman had to be carried up a flight of steps in her wheelchair to get to the polling booth.

● A man did not get a postal vote, although he was eligible, because he could not get to the doctor's surgery and would not trouble the doctor to visit him just to sign the form.

● A man living in a residential unit for 42 years had never voted because he was told voting wasn't for them.

● A woman with cp said she was not registered to vote because she could not get into the polling station and even if she

could, "I can't even hold a pencil."

Disabled people told us about the problems they faced getting to the polling station, getting into the polling booth and marking the ballot paper.

They sometimes rejected a postal or proxy vote as an alternative because it was too difficult to get the form signed by the doctor or because the form was felt to be discriminatory.

Some disabled people were discouraged from voting by other people's attitudes to their disability and because in residential centres they felt the outside world had nothing to do with them.

## Our proposals

As a result of these problems we wrote to over 100 local authorities and electoral registration officers asking them to improve the situation. In particular: ensure that all polling booths and polling stations were accessible; provide a free travel service to polling stations similar to Dial-a-Ride; and allow residents in mental handicap hospitals to use their hospital as the place of residence for electoral registration.

The response from over 50 local authorities has been encouraging. Many wrote back with innovative ideas.

Runnymede Borough Council promised to review all the sites it uses and lay down minimum standards. It is inviting any

disabled elector to air problems they have encountered with electoral officers; the invitation is being circulated with the electoral registration form.

Runnymede is also considering more formal contact with all known establishments caring for disabled people to ensure they are fully aware of their rights.

## Spending money

Rochdale Council is spending £10,000 (half of it a grant from the Treasury) to ensure that all election sites will be accessible for disabled voters. Tape and braille versions of the voting form will be available.

A major complaint from local authorities has been the scope of the Treasury grant, which is only for temporary ramping and not to make a building accessible permanently. Some officers believe that temporary ramps are a potential hazard as they are often difficult to keep in place.

Many local authorities supported a free travel scheme but thought a change in legislation might be needed.

The evidence we have collected has been passed to the Home Office and used to argue for improved procedures for registration officers.

We would still like to hear from disabled people about their recent experiences to swell the evidence.

"The Representation of the People Act 1985 introduced a statutory requirement on local authorities, so far as is reasonable and practicable, to designate as polling places only those premises which are accessible to disabled electors. The Act also enabled physically incapacitated electors to vote by proxy, as an alternative to voting by post, for an indefinite period. . ."

Douglas Hogg, Under Secretary of State for Home Affairs  
25 October 1987

## These are your rights

**Access to polling booths.** Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, amended in 1985, places a particular obligation on district and London borough councils, so far as is reasonable and practicable, to designate as polling stations only places which are accessible.

Home Office guidance to returning officers says that their long-term objective should be to have polling stations which are all capable of easy access by disabled people and that the Treasury will provide grants towards the cost of portable ramps to make buildings accessible.

**Help with voting.** A voter who is blind or otherwise prevented by physical incapacity from voting in the usual way can have his or her ballot paper marked by the presiding officer at the polling station or may vote with the assistance of a companion.

**Postal votes.** An elector who cannot reasonably be expected to go to the polling station in person or vote unaided owing to blindness or physical incapacity may apply to vote by post or proxy for an indefinite period.

The application must be attested by a GP, Christian Science practitioner or registered first level nurse. People living in residential care or local authority

homes or sheltered accommodation may have their application attested by the person in charge.

Applicants registered blind or receiving mobility allowance do not have to have their applications attested.

Applications for postal votes are made on form RPF7B, available from the electoral registration officer or a local political party association.

**Voting in mental illness and mental handicap hospitals.** Voluntary patients may vote, subject to certain restrictions.

To register, they must complete a complex "patient's declaration" (form RPF35) with very little help, attested by a member of the hospital staff authorised by the hospital managers.

Mental illness and mental handicap hospitals cannot be given as a place of residence for voting purposes. An address must be given where the person would be living or formerly lived.

If they cannot vote in person at the polling station using the address at which they are registered, they can apply to vote by post or proxy, using form RPF9, but a separate application must be made for each election.

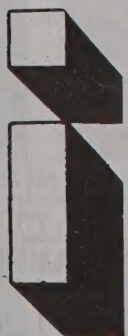
*Brian Lamb is The Spastics Society's lobbyist. Part 3 of his series on parliamentary procedure has had to be held over again, because of lack of space.*

## COULD YOU FOSTER LOUISE?

Louise says, "I have strawberry blonde hair and greeny blue eyes. I like fun fairs, parties, going out at weekends, make-up, children's films, and playing with children of any age. I can eat and drink for myself but I need help with dressing, washing, and toileting because I am in a wheelchair. Once people get to know me and learn how to cope with looking after me they realise that it is not too difficult. I get on with people easily and I would like to live in a big family".

Louise is a bright sociable 13 year old white girl. She is wheelchair dependent as a result of cerebral palsy. She is not able to live at home but has a large family - mum, brothers, and sisters - with whom it is very important for her to keep in touch. At the moment she goes to boarding school, but will be with her foster parents during the holidays and sometimes for weekends. Before things broke down at home, she was at a day special school, and would like to be able to go to day school again.

We can pay generous fostering allowances if we find the right family for Louise. If you live within travelling distance of Islington, and there is space in your family for a lively wheelchair dependent teenager, we would like to hear from you.



Please contact:  
**Graham Meagan or Andrew Wilkes**  
at our Special Services Team,  
166 Upper Street, London N1.  
Telephone: 01-936 7640.

**Islington Council**  
Social Services Department

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For a long time incontinence, the loss of voluntary control of the bladder or bowel, has been a taboo subject. At least attitudes are changing – we have even had the first TV adverts for pads and pants, unthinkable a decade ago.

Incontinence affects over 2 million men and women of all ages in the UK, and is by no means confined to people with a disability.

Less than one in ten sufferers seek medical help. Some are too embarrassed; others accept it as inevitable with age or disability and wrongly assume that nothing can be done.

Unfortunately those who do tell a doctor often receive reassurance rather than practical help.

This is no longer good enough – for most people something *can* now be done to cure or improve incontinence, and even if it persists good management enables a normal life-style.

Continence is a complex skill. Western society has strict, if arbitrary, rules on acceptable toilet behaviour.

We all have to pass urine and faeces. It is the when, where and how which defines who is “continent” and who “incontinent”. Behind a hedge in a rural lay-by is fine, but behind a pillar-box in the High Street may get you arrested!

To be continent one needs the mental ability to know what is acceptable, the physical ability to get to a lavatory and an environment which allows access (even the most agile find aeroplane loos tricky).

The bladder and bowel must also be under voluntary control and there are many possible causes of problems.

## Finding the cause

Incontinence never “just happens”, so the first priority is to find the cause.

Diagnosis of the particular bladder or bowel problem and assessment of how disability affects continence is best done at a specialist unit (often called a Continence or Urodynamic Clinic).

Even those who were once told nothing could be done should be re-investigated at intervals as it may no longer be true. Unfortunately specialist investigations are not yet available everywhere, but most people can be referred if willing to travel. The MS Society information pack tells you how to find your local specialist continence advisor. (See list below).

## Treatments

Everyone should start with optimism and aim for a cure in



Incontinence affects over 2 million men and women of all ages in the UK.

# Break the old taboo

by Christine Norton

the first instance. Treatment will depend on the cause, but might include:

●**Pelvic floor exercises.** All women should learn these. The diagram (see right) shows the pelvic floor muscle which normally holds the bladder and bowel outlets shut. If weakened (eg after childbirth), there may be leakage when you cough or exercise. Women should practice stopping the flow when passing urine, and then perform the same action of pulling up these internal muscles, hold for a count of five, then relax, regularly throughout the day.

## “For most people something can now be done to cure or improve incontinence”

●**Bladder training.** Those with urgency who cannot reach the lavatory in time should keep a record of how often urine is passed and then practice “hanging on”, to gradually extend the interval between visits to the lavatory. This takes tremendous willpower, but urgency really does decrease over a period of weeks.

●**Self-catheterisation.** This may be the answer for a bladder which never empties properly and “overflows”. A simple plastic catheter (tube) is inserted into the bladder outlet to drain off urine, usually several times each day. Most people can manage this with practice, although a few may need a carer to help. Self-catheterisation must only be used on medical advice.

●**Medical.** Incontinence may never become as glamorous as heart transplants, but at last there is some high-powered research. There is even an International Continence Society.

All sorts of drug and surgical treatments have been developed, although it is not yet possible to completely *cure* all types of leakage.

There are even artificial sphincters and implantable electrical devices for those who need (and want) them.

## Living with incontinence

As yet we do not have the knowledge or enough specialist centres to cure everyone. But being incontinent need not prevent you having a full and active life, if it is managed effectively.

●**Equipment.** Companies have at last realised how many people are incontinent and products are launched almost weekly.

Equipment for men, and catheters, are nearly all available on prescription and so there is a wide choice, uniformly across the country (providing you know what to ask for). Recent developments include self-adhesive penile sheaths and sheaths with applicators.

People who need pads and pants (mostly women) or bed protection have less choice as each health authority decides what it will provide and some stock few types, ration quantity and have no delivery service.

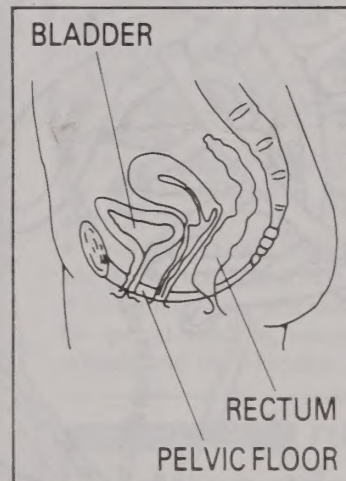
Many people end up buying their own pads, either entirely, or to supplement inadequate health service provision.

It is always worth finding out who controls the supplies (often the senior nurse for community services) as some areas have facilities for special orders if

stock items are unsuitable.

Where supplies are inadequate it is difficult to press for improvements because there is no standard provision across the country.

Recent advances in absorbents include re-usable items eg Duoform pants with waterproof absorbent gusset made by Ganmil, which look like M&S



All women should learn pelvic floor exercises. BOEHRINGER INGLEHEIM

knickers, and disposables with superabsorbent qualities (expensive but much less bulky) eg the Conveen Stay-Dry pad.

●**Services.** Again, these vary greatly between areas. Most health authority disabled

nursing services can provide help with bathing and daily washing. Some also have laundry services, linen loan, collection of disposables and loan of equipment (such as commodes, chemical toilets and urinals). Some financial assistance may also be available (see *Northern Continence Advisory Service* leaflet below).

●**Personal care.** Good skin care, with regular washing and gentle drying are important. It is best to use simple, unscented soaps and creams.

Older women with sore genital skin may need hormone replacement therapy (ask your GP).

Most incontinent people *don't* have a detectable odour, although this is an understandable and common fear. Prompt changing and keeping soiled items in an airtight bucket or bin liner minimises any problem, and there are deodorants on prescription.

It is most important to avoid constipation. Nor should you restrict fluid intake (although certain drinks may irritate some bladders eg alcohol, coffee, cola).

●**Sexual relationships.** Some people feel that incontinence precludes sexual involvement – they feel unattractive and cannot imagine a partner tolerating wet beds or leakage during intercourse or at orgasm.

However, others have found that a loving partner accepts the problem – it may even become a source of humour. Mutual showering or washing can become a natural part of lovemaking.

Washable, absorbent drawsheets are now made which feel like normal sheets (and don't rustle).

## How about a self-help group?

Incontinence *is* a problem, for the sufferer and often for the whole family. But it is no longer necessary to just accept it without trying for a cure.

While treatment and services are not yet universally available, professional and public attitudes are changing,

Maybe the next step should be to set up a self-help organisation (like those in America and Sweden) to press for an improved deal for incontinent people.

## Information and further reading

**Association of Continence Advisors (ACA)** can put you in touch with your nearest specialist nurse continence advisor c/o The Disabled Living Foundation, 380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU, tel: 01-289 6111.

**Disabled Living Foundation Incontinence Advisory Service**, has many leaflets on various aspects of incontinence (send SAE for pricelist). Address above. **Enuresis Resource and Information Centre (ERIC)**, which advises on childhood bedwetting for parents and professionals, has a booklet and a subscription newsletter. Send large SAE with 22p stamp to 65 St Michaels Hill, Bristol BS2 8DZ, tel: (0272) 264920.

**The Multiple Sclerosis Society** has a free information pack with lots of useful information. 25 Effie Road, Fulham, London SW6 1EE, tel: 01-381 4022.

**Northern Continence Advisory Service** has a booklet on financial benefits and services for people with incontinence. Send A4 SAE to The Dene Centre, Castles Farm Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PH, tel: 091-284 0480. **“Incontinence”** by J Blannin & R Feneley (Churchill Livingstone Patient Handbook issue price £3.95) 1984. Simple description of causes and solutions.

**“Managing Incontinence”** by C Gartley (Souvenir Press £8.95) 1988. Adaptation of an American book drawing largely on the personal

experiences of incontinent people. **“Understanding Incontinence”** by D Mandelstam 1989. (Chapman and Hall £5.95 inc p&sp from Disabled Living Foundation). New edition of an old favourite which gives clear, simple advice and information.

**“Overcoming Urinary Incontinence”** by R Millard 1987. (Thorsons Publishing Group £4.99). By an Australian urologist, it outlines in detail a 3-month self-help programme for pelvic floor exercises and bladder training.

**“Incontinence and Inappropriate Urinating”** by G Stokes 1987 (Winslow Press £6.95). Written for the carers of confused, elderly, incontinent people.

Christine Norton has been Continence Adviser at the Bloomsbury Health Authority and the DLF. Her book, *Nursing for Continence*, is being reprinted by the publishers Beaconsfield.





# After ILEA: what will there be in London for c

London boroughs taking over from ILEA in 1990 must submit their final plans to the Education Secretary by 28 February. But there is still time to influence the decision makers, argue Penny Juneidi and Tony Smythe.

“Our daughter has educational needs which could not be met in a mainstream school as currently organised”

by Penny Juneidi  
Whether supporting integration or segregation, most parents of children with special educational needs recognise that the Inner London Education Authority has

tried very hard to provide a high quality special needs education service in special and mainstream schools. Its break-up is, therefore, of great concern to us.  
However, many of us feel deeply disillusioned with an Authority which adopts the ideal of offering equal educational opportunities for all, yet cannot provide sufficient support for statemented children within mainstream schools – or only

offers integration to the most able children with special educational needs.  
A fundamental weakness has been that they have been fitted into a largely unchanged education service, which was designed for “normal” children.  
Additional teaching and non-teaching support has been offered, but on a part-time basis by peripatetic teaching staff or by an ever-diminishing pool of

school-based special needs support staff.  
In practice, it means that these children receive little or inadequate support for the majority of their time in school, more often than not from teaching staff who have not got the trained skill to deal with their difficulties.  
Our daughter, Tala, has educational needs which could not be met in a mainstream school as they are currently organised in ILEA. She attends Meadway special school for children with moderate learning difficulties in Wandsworth.

However, ILEA has been carrying out a consultation on the re-organisation of special schools and proposed that Meadway should be amalgamated into two Wandsworth MLD special schools.

Meadway has issued a proposal for the development of MLD provision in Wandsworth, which recommends that Meadway and Wycliffe schools remain as MLD all-age special schools, but that they develop their facilities to become resource centres supporting the 20 per cent un-statemented children in mainstream schools.

Everyone connected with Meadway believed that ILEA had the power to close the school by this summer term. But it is now emerging that the future of special schools in ILEA will be decided by ILEA’s successor, the Inner City Boroughs.

ILEA has justified the closure of special schools like Meadway by claiming that it has to save money because of Government cut-backs.

If ILEA really has insufficient funds for special needs children, what will be the position of the Inner City Boroughs in 1990, which include some of the poorest boroughs in the country?

Promises from the boroughs abound in their draft education plans, but details of finance for support are totally insufficient and only serve to re-inforce our concerns as parents that our children will inevitably be worse off.

The list of parents’ concerns is endless. What about integration? What about the fragmentation of services for children with low incidence special needs? What about the already patchy and sometimes inconsistent paramedical support services? What about boarding provision?

It is not too late for parents to influence local authorities to change their policies towards special needs children. They are a better bet than Mr Baker who, according to a DES spokesman, is concerned with management structure.

But it is important to realise that under the Education Reform Act 1988, the Government has handed over large areas of management and policy development to the schools, including integrationist policies.

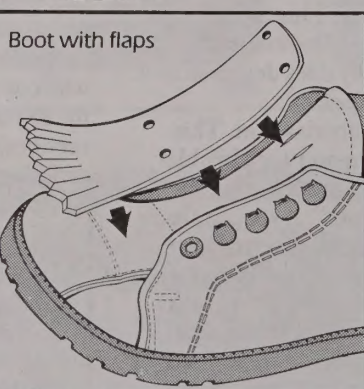
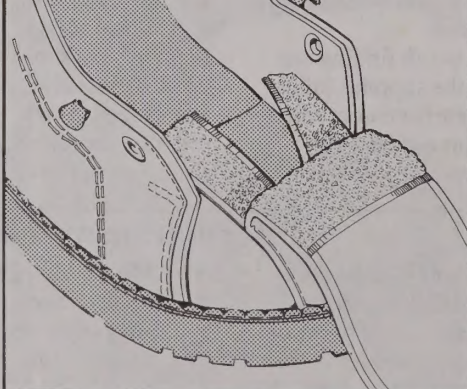
Parents must realise their responsibilities – and act.

*Penny Juneidi is hon president of Parents in Partnership and chair of the governors of Meadway school.*

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# Children with special needs?



Juneidi with daughter Tala. THE GUARDIAN

"Those who want integration now are being disregarded"

by Tony Smythe

Judging from a detailed analysis by the London Boroughs Disability Resource Team, the 13 draft plans produced by the inner London boroughs who are taking over from ILEA were compiled in haste, short on facts and full of questions. The new chief education officers will have their work cut out to get their borough and cross-borough services up and going by April 1990.

As the LBDRT, GLAD and others foresaw, pupils and students with disabilities could lose out and see the modest advances of the 1981 Education Act and the Warnock and Fish reports frittered away.

The LBDRT Education Pro-

the mainstream can disregard its responsibilities to special needs children.

With falling rolls in some special schools, changing perceptions and expectations of disability, the uneven pattern of existing provision across London and the overwhelming weight of research evidence, they are ignoring financial and educational realities. They want to appease everyone but will satisfy no one.

Invariably their plans contain grand statements on equal opportunities which make no reference to disability, while special needs are dealt with discreetly, giving no hint that they belong to the whole education system.

By concentrating on schools, they virtually ignore under-fives, the starting point for integration and assessment, and over-16s.

Only Lewisham has managed



from Franklin Delano Roosevelt special school taking computer and business studies at the mainstream school, Quintin Kynaston. Both are near Swiss Cottage. SALLY & RICHARD GREENHILL



from Franklin Delano Roosevelt Quintin Kynaston also meet up for

LEN CROSS/ILEA

April, the charity Parents in Partnership is organising a conference for parents and people with disabilities. It aims to produce a plan of action. For more information telephone 01-767 3211.

ject has aimed to maintain and improve provision for special needs and, in particular, to get policies and timetables for securing maximum possible access to mainstream education. Change was seen as an opportunity as well as a challenge.

The opportunity is still there.

The final plans may have to go to the Education Secretary soon, but that, we believe, is only a bricks and mortar stage; the real struggle over educational policy will go on to 1990, and even beyond.

Policy makers and advisers in every London borough can still be influenced by appropriate information about special needs and by grass roots pressure from parents and people with disabilities.

Most of the boroughs, under pressure of time, conflicting interests and sheer complexity, are more preoccupied with the carve-up of resources than educational content, equal opportunities and social strategy.

By bidding for every day and residential special school they can lay their hands on, they seek to preserve a dual system where statementing will remain the "passport" to special schools and

to produce a draft plan likely to satisfy the disabled community.

Islington recognised that open enrolment and opting out could encourage discrimination, but meekly added, "Why should popular schools... bother very much with children of this kind?" They dismissed the Fish report as "sadly dated and difficult to realise."

Westminster is generally more business-like, but its commitment to integration remains weak.

ILEA has managed to increase mainstream provision of statemented pupils from 95 in 1985 to 1,400 now. But there are still 6,268 statemented children in special schools.

ILEA estimates that children with severe or complex needs represent 2.8 per cent of the school population, while over 20 per cent have special needs in the broader sense. On the basis of these figures, integration has not been adequately addressed.

We have to go to Newham in outer London to get more sense about what is needed and what is being done.

"Segregated special education is a major factor causing discrimination," according to its plan.



Christmas pudding makers and singers from Meadway school (l to r: Achira Perera, James Bennett, Patrick Aston, Claire Cannon, Tala Juneidi, Victoria Seaward, Tahera Kahn) with Penny Juneidi and Postman Pat songwriter Brian Daly. His Christmas pudding song, sung by the children, will be on record by next Christmas.

"De-segregated special education is the first step in tackling prejudice against people with disabilities." Money for special schools is being unlocked and transferred to meet special needs in the mainstream.

Last month the LBDRT asked borough leaders to implement a 10-point plan:

- Make unequivocal commitment to de-segregation a priority
- End compulsory segregation against the wishes of parents or pupils
- Timetable a phased programme of integration
- Take immediate action in specific areas, eg making some schools accessible
- Improve data on all under-fives, pupils and students with disabilities
- Ensure education policies refer to the implications for disabled people
- Train and retrain mainstream and special school teachers
- Designate clear responsibility for special needs in mainstream schools and on education com-

mittees

- Improve links with health and social services
- Actively collaborate with local voluntary and community groups.

We have also asked the Secretary of State for Education to use his powers to intervene more decisively.

We understand that many parents, while preferring integration, are sceptical about the ability of mainstream schools to meet the individual needs of their children without considerable change in attitude and practice.

But those who want integration now are being disregarded.

In the last analysis it is local pressure that counts. So don't lose any time in making your views known to councillors, MPs, the press and the new inner London education authorities.

Tony Smythe is the education project coordinator for the London Boroughs Disability Resource Team, Room 95, County Hall, London SE1 7PB, tel: 01-633 7101.

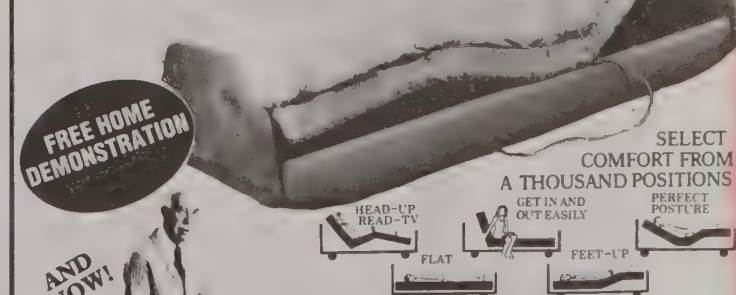
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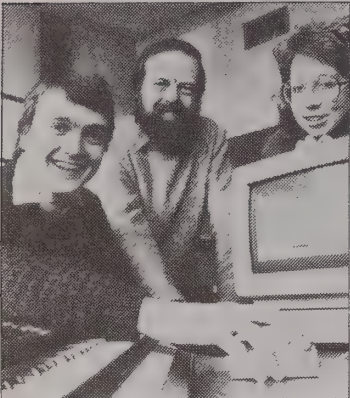
Putting the oom-pa-pa into computer

Two pioneer computer music systems are being developed at York University. But one of them may get no further because the money is running out.

Gordon Dalgarno's Vistamusic system combines sound, vision and touch, enabling even blind-deaf people to experience music.

He has spent the past two and a half years with a grant from Rowntrees (his employers) researching music for people with disabilities. But this is now coming to an end.

"If I don't get some more



The Hunts, with Dr Ross Kirk (middle) demonstrate the Midigrid system.

YORKSHIRE EVENING POST

money soon," he said, "I'll have to go back to sweets."

Vistamusic has been used in at least five UK schools, and has an adapted keyboard for head-pointers. A screen takes sounds and transforms them into shapes and colours, and a miniature loudspeaker allows people with



Pupil from John Jameson School, Leeds, using Vistamusic.

rubella, for example, to feel musical vibrations.

Gordon Dalgarno has also devised a special keyboard to enable head-pointers to hit the right notes, and says that his system can be tailored to suit the needs of most disabled people.

"My aim is to give people with the musical intelligence of Jacqueline Du Pre the chance to realise it, whatever their physical disabilities," he says.

Andy and Caroline Hunt, also at York, have devised the Midigrid system (see photo). A computer mouse finds a box on screen, and a hand-held trigger sets off one of thousands of sounds – ranging from bells to drums to full orchestras – which can be recorded onto a tape.

One Midigrid is already in use at Putney Royal Hospital and Home. Michelle Murphy, a music therapist, works there with several people whose movement and sensory perception is limited.

"We've found it can aid cognition, co-ordination, memory, and movement. It's also a great motivation tool." A patient at Putney who is

recovering from a brain haemorrhage said "I enjoy using the machine; its very good fun."

Putney's Midigrid came just before Christmas, and they are still evaluating its uses. "There are several modifications and different interfaces which we will be trying. Andy Hunt will be coming down soon to discuss these with us," said Ms Murphy.

David Nicholson

BOOKS

Conductive Education

by Maria Hari and Kanoly Akos (translated by Neville Horton Smith and Joy Stevens) (Routledge, £40)

Joy Stevens deserves our congratulations for her efforts over some fifteen years to get *Conductive Education* published in English.

However, since it first appeared in Hungarian in 1971, the material is rather out of date. It is a pity it was not revised and

updated before its publication here, which has been eagerly awaited for so long. The photographs, for example, could easily have been replaced with recent ones from the now well equipped, modern, Peto Institute.

No account is taken of modern neurological thought and the book fails to show how conductive education is employing recent knowledge to assist children in solving their own problems.

The reader needs, I feel, more help in understanding the links between theory and practice and in appreciating their fundamental importance to conductive education.

However, "The daily schedule" in Chapter 13 does go some way towards describing how the children learn, practise and generalise their skills throughout the day, and presenting conductive education as a way of life.

The chapter devoted to "orthofunction" would have been of great value some years ago when it was generally believed that orthofunction was concerned with walking only; now the emphasis should be on the child as a "personality" who has a capacity to learn.

This is not a book for parents wishing to learn more about conductive education; nor is it a textbook for professionals in the field seeking to improve their practice.

(I particularly missed any mention of the toys, the games and the fun which are integral parts of our work.)

Sections of the book are, however, of academic value and doubtless will lead to discussion between more advanced students of conductive education.

Lillemor Jernqvist  
Hornsey Centre for Children Learning

Confession of a Rebel  
The Marriage of a Rebel

by Jack Clemo  
(Spire, £4.94, £3.95)

Jack Clemo has been compared to John Bunyan and been described in the *Sunday Times* as "one of the strangest and most original writers of our time".

Clemon's two autobiographical volumes *Confession of a Rebel* and *The Marriage of a Rebel* are an insight into the life and work of the man himself. Since the first volume was originally published forty years ago, some of the opinions are quite controversial.

Clemon became deaf as a young adult and later on blind too. But his books are not so much about disability as theological and mystical reflections on his life and his search for a wife.

Considering his own disabilities, I was surprised to read the description of his aunt as "deformed and retarded ... a half bald diabetic dwarf".

However, he is not into disability politics at all, and describes physical blindness as "a subject I would never bother to write about except as an incidental complication of religious or erotic problems".

The *In Touch* programme refused to broadcast their interview with him partly because he said he "had no interest in handicaps or in methods of overcoming them" and when he quotes Blake's words:

O why was I born with a different face  
Why was I not born like the rest of my race?

it is not a physical difference he is referring to, but a social one.

Among Clemon's rare reference to disability is a mention of the welfare officers who wished to take him to "clubs and parties for the handicapped", and how he was presented as a writer by the media, revealing that little has changed in nearly thirty years! "They chose to present me as an unromantic but courageous man who had triumphed over handicaps ..."

The very idiosyncratic thought and writing is hardly surprising when one reads what a loner Clemon was as a child: after the age of seven "throughout the rest of my childhood there was not a single boy or girl down in the hamlet ... I was thus ... growing up in an adult world touched only by adult influences, I had no real chum during my school days".

But as Clemon himself says, "My home life and surroundings were actually teeming with the most sympathetic and stimulating influences".

The writing is brilliant, vivid and full of images, as one might anticipate from a writer who is also a poet. He certainly disproved the welfare lady's prediction that if he didn't learn Braille or crafts or the manual alphabet he would "go mad".

At times Jack Clemon's obsession with sex becomes tedious and the two works are very meaty, but they are worth getting your teeth into if you are looking for non-escapist, intellectual material.

Ellen Wilkie

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THEATRE

A Stranger Disintegrates

In their short artistic life, Common Ground have been hailed as one of the freshest young dance groups celebrating the poetry of the body.

Not bad for a team of hearing and deaf dancers who only came together in 1986. They have notched up quite a few triumphs along the way. And I was witness to one in Chichester in February.

The team had spent three days in residency at a West Sussex college, working with GCSE students and people with learning difficulties, from nearby ATCs (adult training colleges). The two groups explored, with Common Ground, themes of identity and integration.

The result was a 15 minute piece that played to a packed house of family and friends. It was a celebration. I was thrilled to be part of the group's success and obvious delight in their achievement of having made it happen.

The college tutors are already planning the next one. And the participants are eager to continue



Members of dance group Common Ground celebrate the poetry of the body.

UTE KLAPHAKE

their new-found taste for dance.

The second half of the evening was Common Ground's, with their new piece that is touring the country, *A Stranger Disintegrates*. I must admit that after my mad dash across Chichester to locate the college, the title was pretty apt!

This production looked at communication, or rather the lack of it: who isn't familiar with the avoidance of eye contact, touch, or the spoken word, as we travel to work, crushed on tubes,

isolated in our little boxes. The dancers tackled the issue with much energy and feeling.

It all rings true: the insanity of normal behaviour and the shock of human contact when it eventually breaks through.

Their fusion of dance, drama, live music and sign language does not come across as a jumble of styles all vying for our attention.

Indeed, they present a new and interesting way of making art "accessible". They make it clear

that they care about empowerment, and that the process is often more important than the end product.

If you catch Common Ground, wave your hands in the air at the end of the show. They deserve it.

Ashley Grey

*Common Ground will be at The Place Theatre in London on 14 March at 8pm performing A Stranger Disintegrates. Ring 01-387 0031 for details, and dates.*

Green Jam's door swings ajar

Green Jam, a theatre company training young adults with mental disabilities to take jobs in the theatre, launched in late January this year.

Set up and run by Greenwich Young People's Theatre (GYPT), the company is jointly funded by the European Social Fund for Innovative Projects and the Inner London Education Authority.

GYPT began in 1970 and has been working with people with learning difficulties ever since. There are now 12 full-time students on the two-year course, with three staff, learning independent living skills. Also art, design and construction, technical, performance, administration and office skills, and integrated work experience.

All participants began a foundation course in October last year, but the course was officially launched on 24 January. The name, though, dates from a 1985 trip to Jamaica (hence "Jam").

"We can't guarantee any of our students a job when they leave," said Mike Ormerod, staff member, "but we're concentrating hard on the things they can do, to build up confidence and competence in one area."

Green Jam have already booked their first performance – at the Greenwich festival in June.

Contact Green Jam, c/o Greenwich Young People's Theatre, Burrage Road, London SE18 7JZ, tel: 01-854 1316.

Lookout for...

Nottingham Playhouse have announced that aural introductions will precede all preview productions at their theatre. Aimed at blind and partially sighted patrons, the scheme began in February, and continues with *An Inspector Calls*, J.B. Priestley's mystery play on Wednesday 12 April. Call Tricia Alvey on (0602) 474361/470882 for details.

Dartington College of Arts are running movement workshops throughout April and May: weekends and five-day courses. Aimed at visually impaired people and workers in this field, the courses aim to improve muscular relaxation, physical alignment, mobility and spacial awareness. Cost: £45 per weekend, £95 per five-day workshop. Professionals should call (0803) 862224, blind people, (0803) 214523.



My problem with any programme about spinally injured people is that having a congenital disability gives me a different perception.

Nevertheless, I must dismiss **40 Minutes: Our Darren** (BBC2, 26 January) as guilty of almost every television crime relating to disability.

It was emotive, had "brave sufferer" tendencies, and emphasised Darren Lillywhite's complete dependency caused by his newly acquired disability. The medical view of disability dominated and the programme laboriously emphasised Darren's physical limitations, omitting to mention social constraints.

Obviously, Darren's tetraplegia requires a difficult period of adjustment, but he has little option other than to get on with life. For Darren's friends, however, the options are greater. Although they're with him now, this could change. Hopefully Darren has no illusions about this.

It was said repeatedly that Darren is "just the same as he was before". Of course he isn't. But this over-simplification sums up the film.

**Same Difference** (C4, 30 January) returned for a series of eight programmes. Based on the first one, and the extracts from the press launch, the omens are good.

*Same Difference* presenter Peter White appeared on *Open Air* the next day (BBC1, 31 January) and deserves an award for valour. He was up against critics from a "disabled workshop" (sic) and also Martin Duffy, who I would call a "disabled presenter/producer". He prefers "broadcaster/journalist who happens to have a handicap". Given this, why did he agree to be on a programme about television's representation of disabled people?

Rachael is one of a group of children who will be 18 in the year 2000, featured in **Citizen 2000** (C4, 17 January). As the only child with a disability (cp), she has already had two programmes to herself. Now, for the first time, she has been featured alongside the others, and does not benefit from the comparison. They talk and play with their toys; Rachael does neither, and could be the target for pity rather than empathy.

Two schools programmes mentioned deafness. **Watch** (BBC2, 2 February) had a hearing impaired dancer, and **You and Me** (BBC2, 26 January 1989) had a delightful dialogue in sign language between puppets Cosmo and Dibbs and *See Hear's* Clive Mason – a treat!

Eastenders' character Colin was officially told of his MS (BBC1, 17 January). Whether it will show the reality, and whether it will bring in genuinely disabled actors, remains to be seen.

Chris Davies

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# Teapots in my head

Patricia Payne of Old Cleeve, Somerset is a writer with a difference—she has dyslexia

My overworked dictionary defines disability as “a drawback”. It does not define dyslexia because, until recently, dyslexia was not recognised as a disability. Sufferers were dim, lazy-minded, a cause of annoyance to teachers, distress to parents and guilt-ridden misery to themselves.

Dyslexia, or word and numeral blindness, is a misnomer, because we can see the printed symbols but they don't always send the same messages to our brains as are received by non-dyslexics.

Re-transmitting the print from page to paper can be difficult too, for a word written backwards looks fine to us.

No two individuals are affected in the same way.

I cannot spell or grasp abstract ideas. A credit and a debit on my bank balance are just words. I think of a credit as a fat black teapot holding my money and a debit as a sullen red one with a hole; money put into that is gone for ever.



Taking a break from writing to relax.

RICHARD GORING

There is no single remedy for dyslexia either. The sufferer, parents, assessors and tutors have to establish the nature of the difficulty, then arrive at solutions by trial, experiment and grinding hard work.

Newspaper reports of children wearing an eyepatch to learn to read, covering the page with colour filters, even playing ball games or doing gymnastics, as in Canada, are misleading. Some

people have been helped by these experiments, but I believe each dyslexic has to find his or her own remedy.

Remedy, not cure. We are stuck with this one, and possibly for life.

The plus side is that people with dyslexia are often of above average intelligence and are gifted in some way, often on the arts side. (But I have known a mathematical genius who could

not read a danger sign!)

Dyslexia is no one's fault.

True, some forms are thought to be hereditary. A mother who confesses she never could do sums and was ten before she learnt to read may have been dyslexic. It runs in families like red hair. (From 4 per cent to 10 per cent of people in the UK are thought to be dyslexic.)

Where do you go for help? The British Dyslexia Association is the national organisation for specific learning difficulties and it can put you in touch with a local group. Its magazine, *Contact*, free to members, is full of information.

I met the word dyslexia when my younger son, Freddy, was diagnosed. He could not read or write. He drew a picture to explain his difficulty.

Later he won an art scholarship to Millfield school in Somerset, which has pioneered work with dyslexic children. He can now write Batchelor of Arts after his name, thanks to Millfield and his own hard work.

My own school reports suggested I was a teacher's pest and my parents' despair. But a fortune-teller told me, “One day you will write”.

Then I found early letters written by my mother and the pattern fell into place. We had three generations of dyslexics in the family.

The years of shame, the burden of guilt, fell away and I floated with joy. I was not stupid or lazy. I had only to sit down and work to fulfil the fortune-teller's prophecy.

I knew I had only a little time to show my mother I could succeed, for she was already very ill.

I had always told myself stories – “Just suppose if...” So I sat down and wrote every night from 8.30 pm to midnight for six weeks, and lost two stone with sheer concentration, having to check nearly every word in my dictionary and accepting help over the words I could not find.

I did not realise a proper book is 165 pages of A4 paper, or 50,000 words. But my novella (a rather short book) has been published and my son illustrated it.

Last month *The Countryman* took an article on badgers and W H Smith is publishing an anthology of romantic stories called *Secret Stories* which includes one of mine.

Now I want to be a writer who is dyslexic, not a dyslexic who happens to write!

*The British Dyslexia Association, 98 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU, tel: (0734) 668271, has 77 affiliated groups. An international conference, Meeting Points, is being held 29 March to 1 April. The National Dyslexia Appeal has reached £300,000, but is aiming for £1.5 million by May this year.*

*Patricia Payne's novella, Where There's One There's Three, which has been described as “a charming story which neatly avoids the sopiness of so many light romances”, costs £3.90 inc p&sp from booksellers or the publishers, Temple House Books, 25 High Street, Lewes, Sussex BN7 2LU.*

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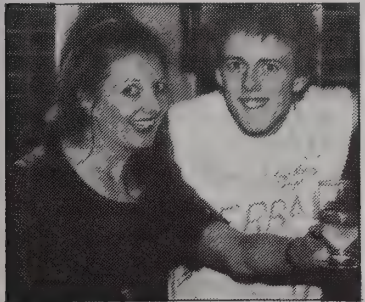
## PROFILE

## Tuppy Owens

Tuppy Owens founded the Outsiders Club, the first dating agency in the UK for people with disabilities. This year they celebrate their tenth anniversary, and now have more than 1000 members.

Welcoming people with disabilities, and others who are nervous or shy, or socially disadvantaged, the club holds regular parties and lunches around the country.

"It all started when one of my friends began to go blind," she says, "and then, because I was writing the *Sex Maniac's Diary*, a 32 year old disabled man wrote to me saying that he had never seen a naked woman. I thought something had to be done about that."



Tuppy and friend.

The club has fees of only £5 (unwaged) and £12 (waged). "This compares with £70 if you sign up with Dateline," she points out, "but it means that running the club is always a bit of a struggle."

Mike Bramley, one of the club's longest standing members, says "Tuppy is amazing. She's just about the only able-bodied person I've ever met who can see things from a disabled person's point of view."

Tuppy herself says it's only a matter of asking the right questions, and listening to what disabled people want. But that is a rare quality, and to go as far as publishing a book of "Practical suggestions" on how to approach the opposite sex is distinctly uncommon ground.

The Outsiders and Tuppy Owens have long been criticised for veering towards pornography. But her attitude to this is straightforward: "sex and love have to be mutual desires, or sex has to be paid for. There has to be a deal." She thinks there is nothing more damaging than giving affection in a charitable way, which might be withdrawn, or leave unrealistic expectations.

The club's tenth birthday party was held in the crypt of a south London church, with a band, drinks all night, hundreds of guests, and then breakfast at 6.30 am.

There were people of all ages, colours and persuasions, dancing, eating, drinking and talking. Tuppy kept the atmosphere charged, with her long braided hair and slinky white plastic trousers. The whole affair proved that, despite its detractors and occasional bad press, the Outsiders still fills a real gap in disabled people's lives.

David Nicholson

I am always very pleased to receive letters from readers about topics raised in my column. This month I am including several contributions in response to recent issues.

"I read with interest the problems a mother was having taking her disabled son to the dentist. (August 1988).

I have been disabled with rheumatoid arthritis since the age of three. The resulting stiffness in my jaw and neck has made it difficult for dentists to look at, let alone work on, my teeth.

Until about the age of 14 I had a very understanding dentist and most of the problems were overcome. But he retired and his successor was very impatient, so that I became increasingly frightened of going to visit him.

Eventually he decided he couldn't cope and sent me to the dental hospital. There I saw a consultant who had more time and better equipment.

The first few times I was very tense and worried so he gave me a "pre-med" to relax me before doing anything.

As I gained confidence in him and he continued to treat me patiently and kindly my fear gradually disappeared.

After a couple of years I no longer worried about a dentist's appointment and now quite happily treat it the same as having my hair done or going shopping.

I have found that the greater range of equipment in a dental hospital, and the fact that the dentists/consultants are paid a set salary and so can afford to take more time, are major advantages.

I do hope my experience will be an encouragement and

## Share Your Problems

with Margaret Morgan

## Dentists, doctors, cold feet and relief



support to Bobby's mother."

Thank you very much for writing so fully. I have passed your letter on to Bobby's mother.

"A copy of the September 1988 issue of *Disability Now* was passed on to me and I was very interested in your column which featured additives, allergies and hyperactivity.

We thought your readers might like to know of Foresight, an Association for the Promotion of Preconceptual Care.

The treatment of hyperactivity is quite complex, as is the provision of preconceptual care to avoid problems in the future.

Doctors working with our organisation have considerable experience and a lot more work on hyperactivity will be undertaken at Surrey University in the next few years.

There is still much to be done and your article made a valuable contribution to this important field.

If any of your readers would like more information please write to: Mrs Belinda Barnes, "Foresight", The Old Vicarage, Church Lane, Whitley, Surrey GU8 5PN, or

telephone between 9.30am and 7.30pm on (042879) 4500."

Thank you for sending this information.

"I was interested in your column about living independently (January 1989). I will be moving out of a residential unit in April and I am really quite scared. I have lived in residential places since I was five and so don't know what it's like to live in an ordinary house. It's a very big move for me and sometimes I get cold feet and feel I can't face it. Do you think this is silly of me?"

No. I understand your apprehensions about losing the security and back-up services that you have experienced for nearly all your life.

I do hope that you are able to talk over your fears with someone who appreciates your situation and can explain, and introduce you to, the supports that will be available for you in the community.

"As you know, my husband died in October 1987 and the housing department told me that I would have to leave the specially adapted bungalow that has been our home for

over 12 years.

I have cerebral palsy, as did my husband, and I was not only mourning my great loss, but feeling considerable anxiety and tension about the thought of having to move from good neighbours and friends. I was kept in a "state of limbo" for nearly a year and you can imagine how difficult this was to cope with.

The Spastics Society's social worker was very supportive and I am most grateful to you for writing to the housing department on my behalf. I am sure this helped to change the housing committee's decision, as I have now heard that I can stay in my home.

It is an enormous relief to know I don't have to worry any more, though those long months of waiting were really terrible."

I am delighted to hear your good news, though I can imagine how unsettling it must have been for you waiting for the local authority housing committee's decision.

It seems heartless of them to have kept you "in limbo" for so many months, especially as at the same time you were trying to get over the loss of your husband. I wonder why it took them so long?

## Share your problems by phone

If you want advice on a personal or spiritual problem, why not talk to Lin Berwick, *Disability Now's* telephone counsellor, who is disabled herself?

Lin is at the end of the line on Monday afternoons from 1pm to 5pm, and on Thursdays from 6pm to 10pm.

Her telephone number is Hornchurch (04024) 77582.

## Isn't It Time You Got Around To Getting About?

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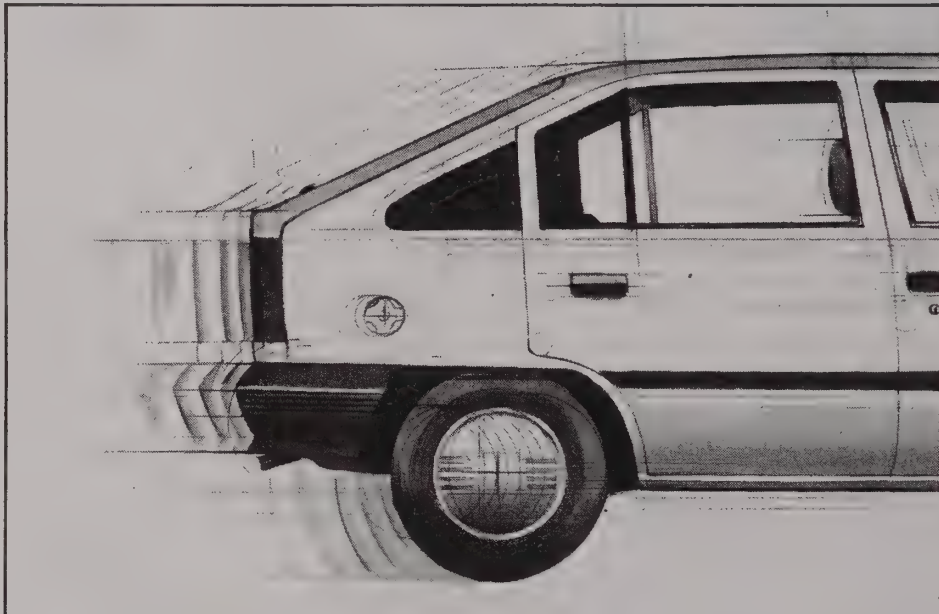
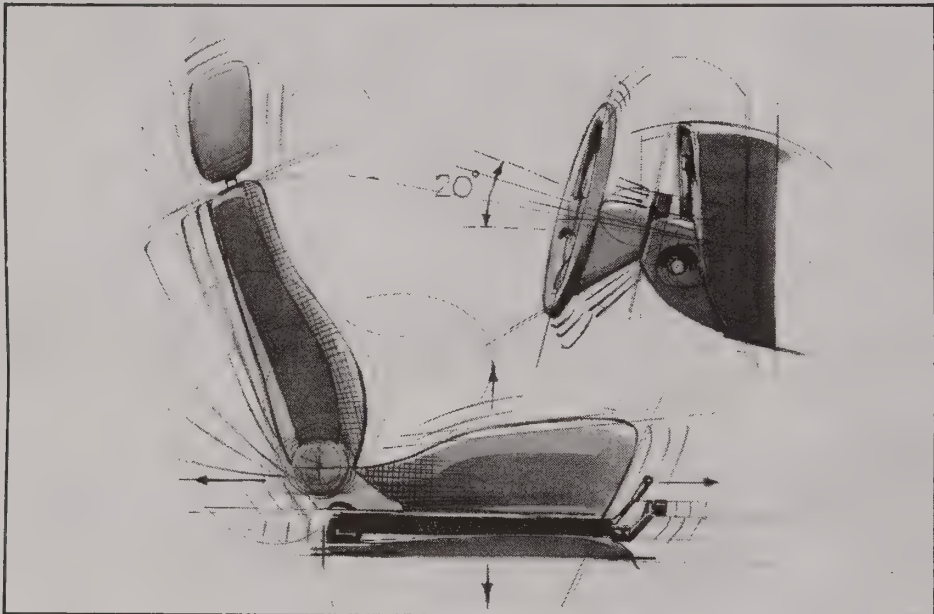
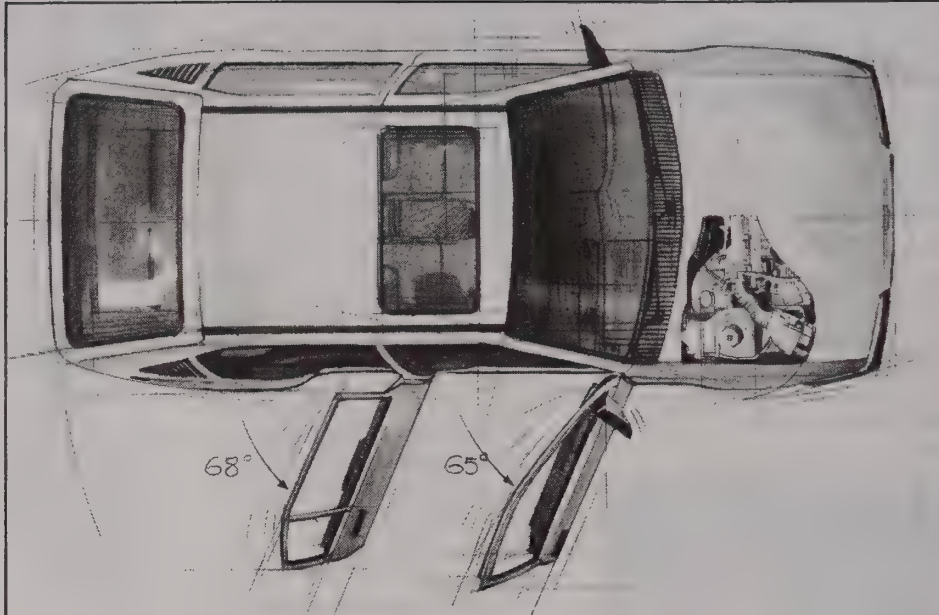
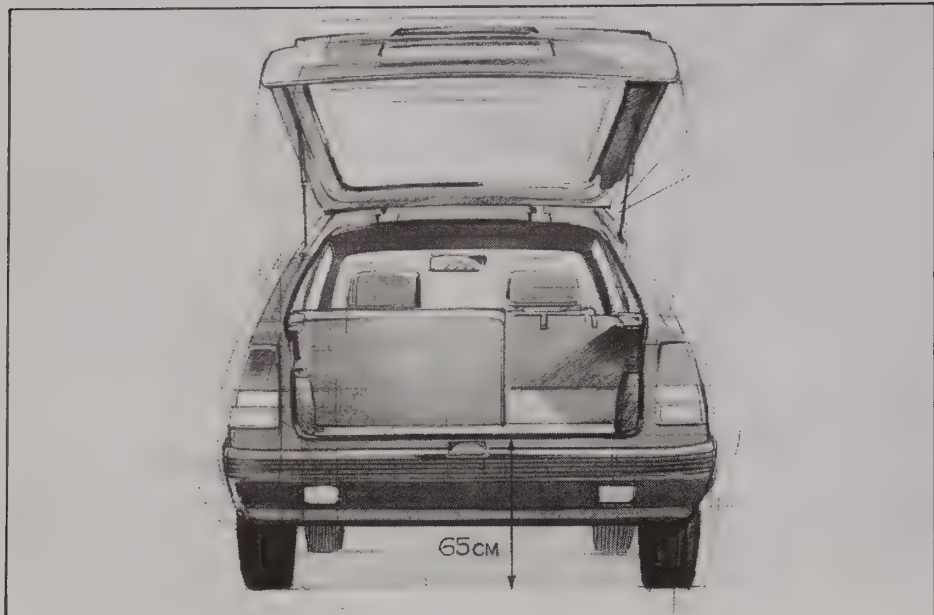
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Helpline on 0582 696332 between 9am-5.30pm Monday-Friday.

DN3 Please send me more information about Vauxhall Motability schemes. (Please tick box)

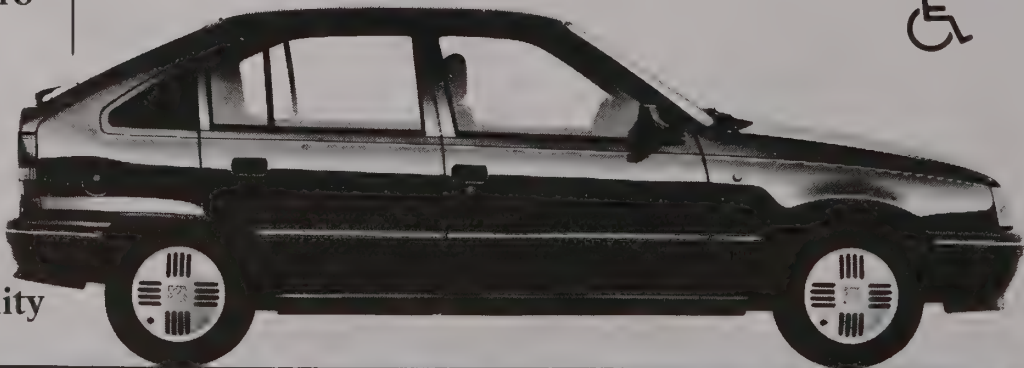
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## INFO

Shell UK Oil have published *Easier Motoring for Disabled Drivers*, listing facilities available at each of their UK garages. It is available free from UOMK/7145 Shell UK Oil, Shell-Mex House, Strand, London WC2R 0DX, tel: 01-257 3000.

The Greater London Association for Disabled People (GLAD) has a new monthly newsletter from April. Each month *London Disability News* will feature an in-depth look at major issues affecting disabled Londoners and a full round-up of the latest news and information. For a free copy of the first issue, contact *London Disability News*, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA, Tel: 01-274 0107.

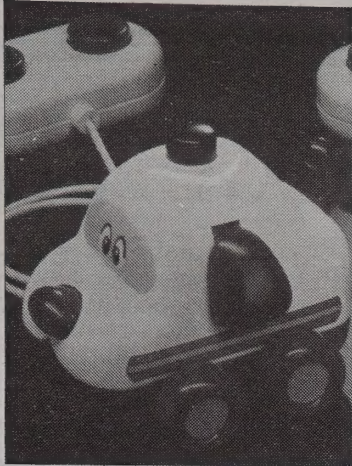
The Talent Centre is a new initiative by Bulmershe Resource Centre in Reading to help disabled people get training and jobs in all areas of the arts. It also helps with job applications and CVs, and advises employers keen to employ disabled people. More information on (0734) 664464.

*Services for People with Disabilities* is a booklet for people living in the Finsbury area of Islington, London. It gives basic information about local and national organisations which can help on subjects as varied as incontinence, holidays, housing or money. Produced by the National Information Forum, it is available free from local libraries, churches and schools.

A report based on a survey of the take-up of this booklet and what readers thought of it will be produced later this year.

*Children with Special Educational Needs* is the first detailed explanation of the new legislation for children with learning difficulties in Northern Ireland. Published by the Northern Ireland Council on Disability, the 72-page book has a clear style and explains the legal changes, assessment procedures, statement contents and appeals advice, plus questions and answers for parents and sample letters. £1.50 + 52p p&p from NICD, 2 Annadale Avenue, Belfast BT7 3JR.

DIAL (Disablement Information and Advice Lines) have appointed a new chairman and deputy chairman: **Chris Clark**, a principal social worker, becomes chairman, and **David Mcfadden** (chair of DIAL Doncaster) becomes deputy. Skill, the national bureau for students with disabilities, has appointed **Deborah Cooper** as their new director. She will be Skill's first woman director, and was previously deputy director. **ASPIRE**, the Association for Spinal Injury Research Rehabilitation and Reintegration, has moved office to: Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Brockley Hill, Stanmore, Middx, HA7 4LP, tel: 01-954 0164/0701.



## CHECKOUT

At the Toy Fair in London last month, speech therapist Lindsay Pennington and information assistant Marney Walker from The Spastics Society chose these toys as stimulating and fun for children with disabilities.

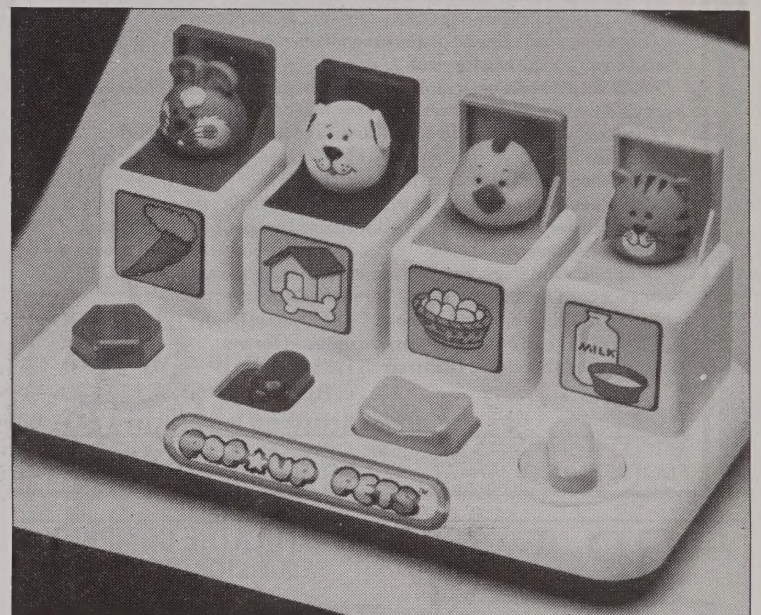
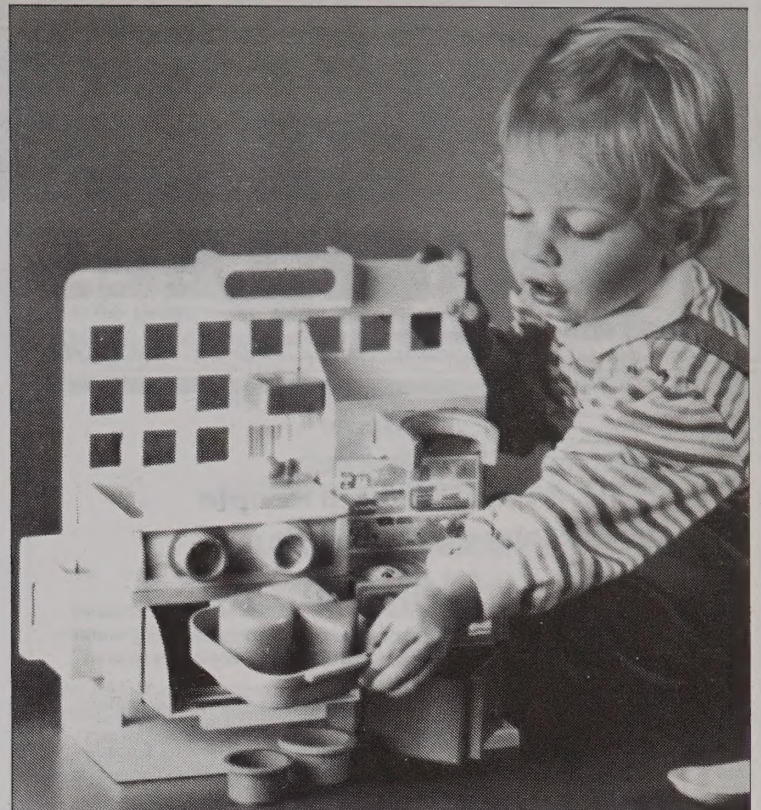
**The Honey Pot Bear**, £9.99 from the Early Learning Centre, (centre left) plays a lullaby when you pull the tag and the bear goes in and out of the honey pot. Good for holding attention and visual tracking.

Also from the Early Learning Centre – **Pop up Pets**, £7.99 (bottom right) which pop up when 4 switches are by pressed, pushed, turned or slid. Good for developing motor skills, cause and effect thinking, memory development and communication skills. (Not suitable for a child with a pronounced startle reflex).

**Animals** from Tomy at around £7 will be available from toy shops in May. These 4-wheeled toys (top left) controlled by 2 switches, are great for any child who can operate a simple switch to learn cause and effect.

The whole range of Fisher Price Toys is recommended. They are good value, virtually unbreakable and have easily replaceable parts. Fun, excellent for learning and encouraging language development and symbolic play. The **Toddler Kitchen** (top right) costs £9.99.

Brio Toys are also good value, attractive, sturdy, well-made toys for learning a range of skills. The **Sailboat**, around £10.75, (left) has colourful, stacking sails on a rocking base.



## WHAT'S ON

**Strength in unity** 4 March. 9.45am-4.30pm. A conference for all disabled people in London – to discuss how you can fight for your rights and have a proper say in shaping policy and practice concerned with disability. The County Hall, London SE1 7PB, tel: Mike Goodman 01-633 8556.

**Quality Case Management – Guidelines for planners and policy makers** 8 March. One day seminar for anyone promoting and designing local services for disabled people. Fee £35. For information and application forms contact Mrs Melanie Kornitzer, Kings Fund Centre, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NF, tel: 01-267 6111.

**Volunteering & Community Care** 8 March. 10am-4pm. One day seminar examining how volunteers can make the difference to community care, including range of projects and opportunities to explore using volunteers in your work. Speaker David Blunkett MP. At the National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakely St, London EC1. Wheelchair accessible. Enquiries Sue Denning 01-609 7481 or Linda Ash 01-278 6601.

**Vocational Rehabilitation – a new approach** 6-7 April, 5-6 June, 11-12 September. Two-day courses providing an in-depth introduction to the principles and practice of vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. Details from John Hill, Rehabilitation Resource Centre, Dept of Systems Science, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB, tel: 01-253 4399 ext 4610.

**European Lupus Awareness Day** 15 April. Lupus support groups from 10 European countries are joining together to gain more widespread recognition of this chronic disease. Contact Mrs Elizabeth Brain SRN, Deputy Director, Lupus Group, Arthritis Care, 5 Grosvenor Crescent, London SW1X 7ER, tel: 01-235 0902.

**Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia)** 17 April-19 June, introductory course. 8 sessions about the nature, assessment and remedy of learning difficulties. For parents, teachers and professionals. Fee £60. 7pm-9.30pm at the Frensham Centre, Farnham, Surrey. Contact Gail Goedkoop on (025 125) 4446.

**Getting it right – ideas into action** 22 April. The Spastics Society's north-west regional conference, Notre Dame College, Liverpool. **Living in the Community – can we do it?** 31 March – 2 April, The Spastics Society's north west Alpha seminar, Beaumont College, Lancaster. Details from Norma Hartshorn on (0925) 74770.

### Castle Priory.

**Audio tape techniques** – one day event. For teachers and support staff. 17 April. Fee £25 inclusive.

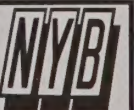
**Video Recording Techniques** – practical course using video for assessment and training. 17-19 April. Tuition £75, residence £49, non-residence £20.

**Photography and Darkroom Techniques** – simple skills for beginners. 19-21 April. Tuition £60, residence £49, non-residence £20.

**Developing personal effectiveness in work and living for young people with special needs** – for all relevant care and teaching staff. 2-4 May. Tuition £75, residence £49, non-residence £20.

Further information from Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallington, Oxon OX10 0HE. Please enclose SAE. Tel: (0491) 37551.

The National Youth Bureau plays a vital role in improving the quality of work with young people throughout the country. Its services include immediate enquiry answering, regular mailings, books, periodicals and training consultancy.



### We have three vacancies:

#### ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR (FINANCE)

We are looking for someone with an interest and enthusiasm for financial planning in a public service body with charitable status. The person appointed is likely to have a background in accountancy and will take responsibility for the preparation of our financial accounts.

#### ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR (YOUTH WORK DEVELOPMENT)

The role of this new senior member of staff will be to support periodic national conferences to be established with youth service practitioners, and to be involved in a variety of other related aspects of the Bureau's work.

Salary for these posts will be on the Local Authority Principal Officers range, starting at no less than pt 40 (£16,347) for a fixed three-year contract in the first instance (a part-time contract will be considered for the finance post).

#### YOUTH ARTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

(Salary range £9,474 to £12,729 pa for a contract of 12 months in the first instance. Secondment considered.)

We are seeking someone with energy, imagination and enthusiasm to establish youth arts as having a major role to play in youth work. The person appointed will have knowledge and experience of the arts in youth work, information and writing skills and the ability to contribute to the design and maintenance of a computerised database.

For further details and application form please contact Kerry Harrison on (0533) 471200 ext. 311, or write to the Personnel Department, National Youth Bureau, 17-23 Albion Street, Leicester LE1 6GD. Closing date: 17th March 1989.

NYB is an equal opportunities employer. People from black and ethnic minority communities and people with disabilities are under-represented within NYB and their applications are particularly welcome. All posts are open to jobshare unless otherwise stated.



## TO ADVERTISE IN DISABILITY NOW CLASSIFIED

Please contact the Advertisement Manager, Jonathan Wine, Kingslea Press Limited, 12 Dock Offices, Lower Road, London SE16 2XL Telephone: 01-252 1362 Fax: 01-237 8019



WE ARE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER *West Yorkshire*

### Directorate of Social Services Real Jobs for Disabled People WORKING OFFICER

Scale 5 (£9,474 - £10,407)

Kirklees Worklink is the most successful Employment Service for Disabled People in the North of England providing help, support and training to enable people with disabilities to work. In the last 2½ years people have secured over 300 jobs, can you help us to make it 500?

You must have the ability to market the service to prospective employers principally within the private sector. This requires good liaison and negotiating skills and an innovative approach to problem solving. Empathy towards people with a wide variety of disabilities is essential. Experience in counselling, vocational guidance and group work is desirable. Adaptability and resilience are key qualities for this post.

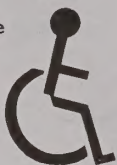
The successful candidate must be able to work on his/her own initiative, manage a caseload of 30-50 customers and help them to bargain effectively to secure appropriate employment.

Only disabled people need apply as this post is being advertised under the provisions of the Disabled Persons Employment Act.

All applicants must be able to demonstrate a good understanding and willingness to work with the Authority Equal Opportunities Policies. An ability to work with a mixed racial group is essential.

As Black people are under represented within the staff/team we particularly wish to receive applications from Black disabled people. Section 38(1)(b) of the Race Relations Act applies.

For application form and further information please contact the Director of Social Services, Oldgate House, 2 Oldgate, Huddersfield. Tel: Huddersfield (0484) 22133 ext 2417 to whom completed forms should be returned by 10th March 1989.



KIRKLEES OPERATES AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY  
FULL DETAILS OF WHICH WILL BE SUPPLIED TO ALL APPLICANTS

## HOLIDAYS

Red Cross House, Inverness, offers Respite/Care Activity holidays throughout the year to disabled people aged between 16 years and retirement age. A 24-hour care facility is provided by the skilled Care Staff and Voluntary helpers. Accommodation is single hotel standard bedrooms. Whether your requirements are for outdoor adventure or something a little quieter, why not contact us for details of what we have to offer. For further information please contact Mike Webster on Inverness (0463) 234939.

Brittany Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details C Hodgson (0924) 454300.

Holiday in Surrey - woodland, heath, attractive towns, canal trips, all nearby. We are purpose-built for wheelchairs. Shower, bath etc have grab rails. No steps. Large accessible garden. B/B evg meal from £17.50. Car essential. Audobon House, 73 Lodge Hill Road, Farnham GU10 3RB. Phone (0252) 715589 or 724386.

The Cornish Spastics Society, Varcoe House Holiday Flats. Two well-equipped, self-catering flats, to sleep 5 to 6, adapted for disabled people. Level access to flats and nearby sandy beach. Ample parking. Seasonal price range, to cover maintenance only, £60 - £75 per week. Details from Mr Elliott, 3 Bosvean Gardens, Illogan, Nr Redruth, Cornwall TR16 4DH. Tel: (0209) 218650.

Holidays continued page 19.

## DRIBBLE BIBS

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## Can anyone help?

We would like to continue offering *Disability Now* on disc to disabled people who cannot hold the newspaper. The home computers involved are the BBC PC and PCW. If you can help with a very worthwhile project, please contact Greg, Tel: (02407) 4231.

## RESEARCHER REQUIRED

FOR GRAEAE Theatre Company, Britain's only professional company of Disabled performers. We are looking for someone to investigate the current provision of writing facilities available to Disabled people. The contract is for three months work spread over a six month period. Fee negotiable depending on experience. We are seeking a Disabled person to fill this post.

For a job description please contact: The Administrator, Graeae Theatre Company, The Diorama, 18 Park Square East, London NW1. Tel: 01-935 5588.

# SENIOR WAGES CLERK

This is a 12-month contract position for a person fully experienced in all aspects of payroll operation who is able to work in a very busy and varied environment.

Salary will be around £12,000 per annum.

Please write with cv, by 7 March 1989, quoting reference 562/DN, to Doug Green, Personnel & Welfare Executive, LWT, South Bank Television Centre, London SE1 9LT.

We expect a large response to this advertisement and, therefore, may not be able to respond to all candidates. If you do not hear by 13 March 1989 you should assume that you have not been successful on this occasion.

**LWT is an equal opportunity employer and positively welcomes applications from all sections of the community.**

LVW/TT

## LAMBETH

SERVICES WELL WORTH DEFENDING

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

#### Community Affairs Committee

#### Accountant

£15,762-£17,001 pa inc.

Responsible for financial advice to the Community Affairs Division of the Chief Executive's Office, although reporting to the Director of Finance. Candidates should have experience in revenue and capital budgeting, final accounts and financial control and administration. In particular, experience in dealing with the voluntary organisations and their accounts is required.

Given the nature of the workforce and the under-representation of black people, women and disabled people, applicants from these groups are positively welcomed for this post. This post is covered by Section 38(1)(b) of the Race Relations Act 1976 and Section 48(1)(b) of the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975. Ref. F51.\*

Application forms and further details are available from the Directorate of Finance, London Borough of Lambeth, Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, London SW2. Tel: 01-274 7722 ext 2534.

## FINANCE

#### Temp Snr. Accountant (up to 12 months)

£14,178-£15,417 pa inc.

The Senior Accountant is responsible for provision of financial advice and information to committees of the Council.

Experience of computerised accounting systems in a large organisation and knowledge of local authority accounting practice is essential. An understanding of and a positive commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy and willingness to play an active part in its implementation.

Given the make-up of our workforce and the under representation of black people and women, applicants from these disadvantaged groups are positively encouraged to apply for this post. This post is covered by Section 38(1)(b) of the Race Relations Act 1976 and Section 48(1)(d) of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. Ref. F2.\*

Closing date: 10th March 1989.

#### Housing Benefits Group Manager

£15,762-£17,001 pa inc.

You will be required to manage our Control Section dealing with overpayments, payments and monitoring. You need experience of supervising in a multi-racial area using an on-line Computer System, identifying system errors. The ability to liaise with other sections and an understanding of the problems faced by disadvantaged groups is essential.

Given the nature of the workforce and the under-representation of black people, women and disabled people, applicants from these groups are positively welcomed for this post. This post is covered by Section 38(1)(b) of the Race Relations Act 1976 and Section 48(1)(d) of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. Ref. F52.\*

Application forms and further details are available from the Directorate of Finance, London Borough of Lambeth, Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, London SW2. Tel: 01-274 7722 ext. 2534.

## HOW TO APPLY

Please ensure you apply to the appropriate Directorate as indicated at the end of each section.

Always quote the appropriate reference number.

\*Post suitable for job sharing.

Closing dates for all posts 3rd March 1989 unless otherwise indicated.

As part of the Council's equal opportunity employment policy applications are invited from people regardless of race, creed, nationality, disability, age, sex, or responsibility for children or dependants and from lesbians and gay men.

Well worth  
working for.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

## IS NOT JUST A POLICY STATEMENT

**W**e put people first. In Southwark, equality of opportunity in employment is a reality in practice, and not simply a paper commitment.

We do not discriminate on grounds of race, age, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation or domestic circumstances. The promotion and training of staff we employ follows the same policy.

All our vacancies are compiled in a weekly list so that we can reach as many members of the community as possible. The list is freely available by calling the Recruitment Section on 01-701 2870 or 708 1954 (24 hour answerphone) or returning the coupon below to the Personnel Officer, London Borough of Southwark, 25 Commercial Way, London SE15 6DG.

Please send me details of employment opportunities in the London Borough of Southwark.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_





## HOLIDAYS

Activity and boating holidays for families or groups of disabled people. Self catering accommodation in attractive A-frame cabins. For further details contact Queen Elizabeth Activities Centre, Pylands Lane, Upper Hamble Country Park, Bursledon, Hampshire, tel: (042 121) 4844 (office hours).

**Tanners Hatch Youth Hostel**, conservation week for disabled people – 13-19 August 1989. Suitable for disabled but not wheelchair users. Based at Dorking, Surrey. Tel: (0372) 52528. Cost from £51.00.

**Bronte countryside**, W. Yorks. Fully adapted bungalow, spacious rooms, ramp, level access, Parker bath etc. For details phone Margaret Rhodes on (0535) 44221.

**Holiday house in Argyll** to let, suitable for wheelchair users. Sleeps 8. Available August. Contact Miss Stroyan, Cala-Na-Sith, Duror, Argyll, tel: (063 174) 233.

**Sunny Tenerife**, Los Cristianos. As featured on TV and radio, the beautiful "Mar y Sol" Health and Fitness Resort. Purpose-built, totally wheelchair-accessible. Swimming pools, saunas, gymnasium, physiotherapy. Apartments for rent or ownership. I can arrange your flights too! "BRILLIANT ... AMAZING!" says BBC TV's The Travel Show. Come, see for yourself! Specially adapted taxi service from Tenerife airport. Video (£15 refundable deposit) brochure: Lynne James, 7 Overpool Road, Ellesmere Port L66 1JW. Tel: 051-339 5316.

**Will access be easy?** Are the rooms big enough? Is there a lift? For a trouble-free holiday with all the family try **ASHWELLTHORPE HALL HOTEL**, a discreetly adapted manor house set in acres of beautiful grounds. 22 bedrooms – centrally heated throughout – licensed bars – free use of wheelchairs and other aids – mini-bus – half or full board. Tel: (051841) 324 ... or write to The Manager, Ashwellthorpe Hall Hotel, Ashwellthorpe, Norwich NR16 1EX.

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## FOR SALE

**Voyager 3-wheeler Scooter**, condition as new. Cost £1,399 July '88, owner hospitalised August. Receipt available. Will accept £1,100 ono. Tel: (0296) 85610 mornings/evenings (Aylesbury).

**Orthokinetics motorised rising armchair**. Motorised reclining back and foot rest. Neutral colour. As new cost £1,300. Will sell for £800. Hampshire (0962) 63253 evenings.

**Vauxhall Astra 1600** automatic 1983 5-door saloon. 60,000 miles. Power steering. Reselco hand controls. £2,000 ono. Tel: 01-381 1227.

**Electric wheelchair** vgc. BEC KC 40, only 2 years old. 2 new batteries and charger plus kerb climber. £150 ono. Tel: Essex (0268) 684497.

**Elva de luxe 3-wheeled battery powered special scooter**, with lights, basket, cover, rider's cape and charger. Cost £1237 new, travelled less than 15 miles, offered at £900 ono, buyer collects basis. Tel: Dersingham (0485) 40625.

**BEC Superscooter**. Excellent condition with new batteries. £500. Tel: 01-546 1676.

**Levo wheelchair** in excellent condition with raise and lower facility. Cost £2,500 new, offers to Huddersfield (0484) 510760.

**Alvemo 400 wheelchair**, as new, with accessories. Cost £700 – will take £550

ono. Tel: Miss Sparks (0704) 43715 (Southport).

We have several part-exchanged electric wheelchairs, scooters and battery cars very cheap, because we need the space. Buckingham Mobility Centre (0280) 816808.

**Vauxhall Cavalier 1600L**, saloon, automatic, PAS, silver/blue metallic, August 1985, 16,000 miles, joy-stick steering for use with left hand, Feeny & Johnson vacuum brake and accelerator for use with right hand, electronic front windows, £12,000 ono. Phone: Oxford (0865) 772519.

**Electric wheelchairs/scooters/battery cars**. All makes, models wanted and for sale. Nearly new, hardly used from half price. Demonstrations and collections. Free advice. All areas. Contact Mr Gibbon. Tel: 021-357 4965 anytime.

**Brotherwood Conversions** have for sale a range of second hand converted vehicles for transporting the wheelchair bound, from £3,500. For a detailed list please phone (0935) 872603 or send SAE, Brotherwood Conversions, Station Garage, Yetminster, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 6LH.

**Ford Escort 1.6L** automatic, 1984 A-reg, adapted hand controls including left-hand accelerator/brake and right-hand parking brake. £2,400. Tel: Hove (0273) 202721.

**Horizon BEC 80K** electric wheelchair with dry batteries and charger, with joystick. Virtually brand new, £1,000 ono. Tel Mrs Gladwin, Folkestone (0303) 277497.

**Ford Escort 1.3L** Automatic (V Reg). Excellent condition. Power steering, servo brakes with F & J hand controls, left or right foot accelerator. £1,100 ono. Paul Finn, tel: Ascot (0990) 20191.

**Batrchair** hardly used. Over £1,000 new, £400 ono. Also BEC Scoota, less than one year old, £400 ono. Tel: Basil-don (0268) 554564 after 7pm.

## WANTED

**Co-ordinator, Arts and Disability**. 16 hours, £3,859 pa. Studio 3, a young people's arts group in Barking and Dagenham are currently developing their work in arts and disability. A worker is required for an initial one year contract to work alongside established groups to organise and co-ordinate a "Celebration Day" promoting arts for disabled people. Knowledge and interest of arts and disability is essential. We actively encourage disabled people to apply. Contact: Studio 3, c/o VSA, 383 Heathway, Dagenham, Essex RM9 5AG, tel: 01-593 7586. Closing date Monday 27 March.

*Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertiser before relying on them.*

If you would like DN on tape contact Gayle Mooney on 01-636 5020 ext 244.

## NORTH WEST SHAPE

### DIRECTOR

SALARY £11,934

We require a highly experienced and talented person to take responsibility for this rapidly developing arts organisation. Previous experience in a voluntary sector arts environment at a high level is essential, as is an awareness of the disabled people's movement. Full understanding of financial issues at all levels from bookkeeping to budget control and the ability to head a team of highly committed staff are also essential requirements of this demanding post.

We would particularly like to encourage applications from disabled people.

Closing date for completed applications Thursday 23rd March.

Further details from: North West Shape, Behind Shawgrove School, Cavendish Road, Manchester M20 8JR. Tel: 061-434 8666

**We are taking positive action on disability**

**CLERKENWELL CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

## Advice Worker Full-time Post

**This post is only available to applicants with disabilities Full in-service training provided**

As part of our positive action approach to Equal Opportunities we have designated this generalist advice worker post for a person with a disability.

You will be part of a team serving a diverse community, dealing with the whole range of enquiries, but offering a high level of practical support to clients on social security and housing problems in particular.

No previous advice work experience is required, but you should have some experience of dealing with people – whether in a previous job or in a spare time capacity. A commitment to Equal Opportunities and to Anti-Racism is essential.

**Salary: £11058 – £13059. Closing date: Friday 17 March 1989**

**For further details and an application form please send a LARGE addressed envelope (no stamp) marked N13 to Tracy Winstone, GLCABS, 136-144 City Road, London EC1V 2QN.**

As an Equal Opportunity employer, GLCABS wishes to encourage positively all applications regardless of disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or creed.

**Citizens Advice Bureau**

## ARTS ORGANISATIONS!

**Are you planning a major one-off event?**

**Do you need to improve access and facilities for disabled people?**

**Would you like in-house training in disability issues?**

**Greater London Arts can provide grants in these areas – here's how it works:**

### MAJOR ONE-OFF EVENTS –

those of regional significance involving a wide range of people from all over London, events which have not previously taken place in London and which contribute significantly to London's cultural life will be considered.

**Deadlines: 29 May and 23 October.**

### PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES –

small capital grants are available to arts organisations for improvements in physical access and facilities for disabled people in the arts. Grants are also available for in-house training in disability issues for arts organisation staff.

**Deadlines: 17 April and 1 October**

**Full details and application forms from: Grants Unit, Greater London Arts, 9 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD. Please quote ref: DNG.**

Greater London Arts welcomes applications from all sections of the community irrespective of an individual's sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities, age, political or religious belief or responsibility for dependents.



## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Salary: £7,000 – £8,000 depending on age and experience.

ICAN is a nationwide charity caring for the needs of disabled children and young adults. We require an administrative assistant to work as part of the team on our First Chance Project.

The ability to type accurately is more important than speed. Candidates should have some knowledge of computers, be able to work on their own initiative, take minutes and deal with enquiries on the telephone. We hope to hold interviews towards the end of March. We particularly welcome applications from disabled people and black people as they are under-represented at this level. This post is covered by Section 38(1)(b) of the Race Relations Act 1976.

**For further information and an application form contact:**

**Reg McLaughlin, First Chance Centre, 87 Masbro Road, London W14 0LR. Telephone: 01-603 7481.**

## Publicity Assistant Starting salary £11,058 Including ILW

The Spastics Society is looking for a Publicity Assistant to join an established Press and Publicity team.

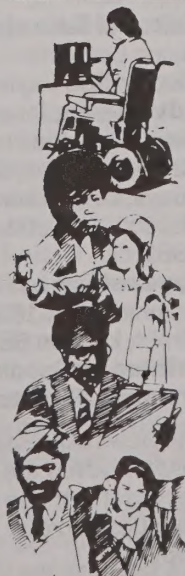
This is an excellent opportunity to assist in the production of a wide range of publicity material including leaflets, brochures, audio-visual presentations, exhibitions and advertising – often working to tight deadlines.

Good administrative skills are essential, though opportunities exist to take the initiative and show creative talent, especially through *Society Newsletter*, the quarterly paper for 3500 staff nationwide.

We should like to hear from people who are well-organised, communicative, and who can demonstrate a positive interest in publicity work. Relevant experience is essential.

**For an informal discussion and/or application form call Neil Johns on 01-636 5020. Closing date is Monday 13 March. Interviews will be held on Thursday 16 March.**

**THE SPASTICS SOCIETY**  
FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY



## 'OPEN ACCESS' TO JOBS

As the largest City Council in the country and by far the biggest employer in Birmingham, we employ over 50,000 people, and regularly have a number of vacancies of all types and at all levels – manual, craft, office, technical and managerial.

The present make-up of our workforce does not reflect the community it serves. In order to help us change this, we particularly welcome more job applications from women and men with disabilities, who are under-represented in many areas of work.

Interested? ... then make sure you see our weekly Jobs Bulletin which lists all of our current vacancies. It can be seen at all Job Centres and Neighbourhood Offices in Birmingham. Selected vacancies also appear in every Thursday's Birmingham Evening Mail. If you live outside the City, you can obtain this week's Jobs Bulletin by 'phoning 021-235 3852 during office hours.

## Birmingham City Council

The City Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community, irrespective of race, colour, gender, sexuality or disability. Job Sharers welcome.



TUC equality campaign

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) are to produce a Bill of Rights, outlining disabled people's rights to equal opportunities at work.

They hope to introduce it into parliament next autumn through a private member's bill or under the ten minute rule.

The Bill is part of the TUC's year of equal opportunities for all, including women, racial minorities, young people and people with disabilities.

One union in particular, the Manufacturing, Science and Finance union (MSF), has set down a list of aims for 1989. It sees training, advice, access, raising awareness, canvassing for membership amongst disabled people and supporting the TUC

Bill of Rights as priorities for the year.

Ken Gill, MSF's general secretary, reminded members of the TUC's motto: "an injury to one is an injury to all." He remarked on its particular relevance for disabled people.

Trevor Mawer, TUC assistant secretary, argued that it is vital to put pressure on parliament. "There is a race relations act, a sex discrimination act, but nothing comparable or so comprehensive relating to disabled people," he said.

The TUC have been holding talks with the all-party disablement group, including MPs Alf Morris and Jack Ashley, and with sympathisers from the House of Lords.



Joe Graham and tea-room staff at the Mariners Hotel in Rye, Sussex, celebrate the expansion into tourist rooms and a new hostel for people with learning difficulties.

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Medical approach "causes depression"

The traditional medical approach to disability is inadequate, inflexible and causes unnecessary depression and distress to people with physical disabilities.

This is one of the main findings of a report by the British Psychological Society, the first of its kind in Britain, into the mental health aspects of disability, to be published this summer.

The draft summary of the report, says the medical profession's focus on impairment is: "negative and devaluing, implying that disability is a tragic loss."

"Yet many people with disabilities believe the impairment is not the main cause of their distress. Rather, it results from being put in an unnecessarily passive, powerless and dependent role."

Dr Louise Wallace, chair of the report's working party, says one London study among 130 disabled people found depression in 76 per cent of them. "There are high levels of psychological problems but we are

saying that they are not inevitable."

The report calls for a new medical approach involving disabled people in planning their own services, which must be flexible and properly financed.

At the moment mental health problems are caused by the lack of co-ordination between services and their failure to help with changes in lifestyle.

The report states: "Far greater attention must be given to empowering people with disabilities to act as experts on aspects of their problems, to enhance their ability to take informed decisions and learn strategies for self-management."

It endorses the recommendations of a report from the Prince of Wales Advisory Group on Disability in 1985, that all services adopt six key principles:

- ★ choice about living options
- ★ consultation with consumers

★ information to disabled people and families

★ participation in community and national life based on equal opportunities in access, housing, employment, education, mobility and leisure

★ recognition of the shortcomings of the medical model

★ autonomy in personal decision-making.

Labour MP David Blunkett, who is blind, says in a preface to the report: "Expecting people to be grateful for whatever they receive, or whatever options are put before them, is unacceptable. Too often, the concentration on the repair of the body neglects the emotional crisis within."

The final report will be sent to all MPs, health districts and disability organisations.

Psychology and Physical Disability. Report from the British Psychological Society, tel: (0533) 549568.

Disability Now

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Editor Mary Wilkinson

Reporters Geraldine Holden

David Nicholson

Editorial Secretary

Alison Eastgate

Circulation Gayle Mooney

Advertising Jonathan

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